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THE CREDENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY

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THE CREDENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

MARTIN J. SCOTT, S.J.

AUTHOR OF "GOD AND MYSELF," "THE HAND OF GOD," AND "CONVENT LIFE"

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"HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN, AND HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT"

How learnedly ye fathom Godhead's deep,
The deep Eternity, Infinitude,
Him that ye call the Galilean rude,
As in the vitriol the quill ye steep!
Christ was not God, ye scoff and then ye heap
High words, to prove Him but a Rabbi shrewd,
With spell of Eastern prodigies imbued,
To bring on lowly souls His deadly sleep.
Christ but a man! God only to the blind!
The falsifier of a trusting age!
The victim of a nation's rage!
Deceiver of Himself and human kind!
Ah fools, ye wise, *who cannot see the worth*
Of your own souls that brought a God to earth.

—Hugh F. Blunt

PREFACE

IN books, magazines and newspapers one not infrequently reads that Christianity has been tried and found wanting. And why? Because it has not prevented or checked the crimes and outrages of modern peoples.

But suppose that most of these nations have been engaged during the past generation or two in obliterating Christianity! Suppose that press and theatre and government have often been in a conspiracy to throttle Christianity! Suppose that the evils of which we complain are the direct result of crowding out Christian principles of conduct from private and public life!

If you become seriously ill after disobeying a doctor's orders, will you saddle the illness on the physician? Yet that is what some people are doing nowadays. They have rejected the Great Physician and scorned His remedies and now they decry Him because He has not kept them well.

Christ knew human nature better than anyone who was ever in this world. He prescribed once for all for human welfare. Whenever His prescriptions

are followed, the individual, the family, the state, are in well-being. When His prescriptions are ignored or reviled, calamity is sure to follow. His prescriptions and Himself as well have been ignored and assailed the past few generations. With what result? The world has been scourged by most virulent and malignant plagues, culminating in the World War. Christianity has not failed, but mankind has failed Christianity: And the only salvation for the world is a return to Christ, the Great Physician of mankind, and to Christianity, His saving prescription.

Knowing that this is an age of indifference and antagonism to religion, I have endeavored in the following treatise to meet an indifferent and antagonistic world with a statement of Christianity's case which should appeal to such conditions of mind. All I ask is a fair hearing. The inherent merits of Christianity will do the rest.

In the past Christianity faced worse conditions than confront us today. When Hun and Vandal and Goth swept down through Europe and made a desert of it, Christianity took these barbarians and fashioned them into the civilized peoples of modern Europe. A new devastation now threatens the world. One thing only will save us from it, a return to Christianity; not merely a nominal return, but the adoption in private and public life of the principles and spirit of Christianity.

A perusal of these pages will, it is hoped, make the reader realize that the future is bright no matter how dark the outlook, if only mankind will follow the Light which enlighteneth the world.

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THE CREDENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER I

CHRISTIANITY THE MOST STARTLING INNOVATION IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

THE most revolutionary change that ever happened among men was the introduction of Christianity.

There are certain changes in mankind which are just as hard to effect as to change a stone into bread. You know how hard it is to change a man's character. It is much harder to change the character of a nation, and impossible, humanly speaking, to change the character of a whole group of nations, constituting a large part of the world. Christianity did that.

It was a startling proposition that Jesus Christ made to the world. He bade it change its point of view, its way of living and its aspirations. He introduced a new and strange thing into the world. It was so new and strange that if beforehand it had been placed before a jury of sensible men, they would have

declared its establishment a matter of impossibility. It was so startling a reform that it antagonized every interest known in pagan society. It aimed not only at customs and privileges of the people at large, but also at the prerogatives of their rulers. It condemned passions and vices which were sanctioned by longstanding custom and even by religion itself.

Never before in the history of the world was there proposed such a revolutionary doctrine as Christianity. Revolutions and reforms before and since have usually made an appeal to the interests and inclinations of the masses. Christianity, instead of appealing to the powerful passions of mankind, actually opposed them. We are right therefore in saying that Christianity was the most startling change ever introduced into the world.

It is hard for us to realize how startling that change was. We are living amidst customs and traditions which are the result of Christianity. Hence we cannot appreciate what a tremendous innovation it was.

However, we shall endeavor to consider a few points which will give us an indication of what a superhuman task it was to establish the religion of Jesus Christ. And when we realize to some little extent the impossibility, from a human standpoint, of effecting such a change in the world, we shall see that it called for a power beyond anything of earth.

No combination of human factors could ever have

introduced the religion of Jesus Christ among mankind. You might just as well expect to grow a most delicate plant on an asphalt pavement as to expect the spiritual doctrine of Jesus Christ to take root in the material and sensual world which was its soil. The difference between paganism and Christianity was the difference between earth and heaven. To have this heavenly plant take root and flourish in the world was possible only to divine power.

In order to realize the natural impossibility of establishing Christianity, we shall consider some conditions it had to contend with. Once we understand the nature of the world and the nature of Christianity, we shall see that unless the religion of Christ presented divine credentials it could never have gotten even a start among mankind, to say nothing of dominating the world.

What then did Christianity have to face in obtaining a foothold in the world? We know it had to contend with vice and idolatry and national traditions and other mighty forces, but perhaps its greatest obstacle was the prerogatives of rulers.

The lords of the pagan world at the time of Christianity's appearance were considered almost as gods. Some were actually deified. Their statues were erected in the temples and divine honors were paid to them. And these rulers acted as gods. They knew no law. They were a law to themselves. They took life, liberty and possessions from their sub-

jects. And the subordinate rulers, whose number was legion, assumed the same prerogatives. The monarchs and their delegated rulers absolutely dominated the people.[1]

In referring to rulers I confine myself to those of the Roman Empire, which represented the highest advance in civilization. Cæsar, the mighty Cæsar, was of such debased morals that Christian modesty forbids even the name of his dreadful vices. Yet he not only practised them openly but gloried in them. His soldiers sang his unnatural vices as he passed through the camp, and he heard them with approval. Augustus, of the Golden Age, decreed divine honors to Cæsar, erected an altar and statue to his worship, and on the Ides of March, as related by Suetonius, ordered the slaughter of three hundred Roman nobles around this altar.[2]

Tiberius was a slave to the most abominable vices. Murder, lust and confiscation made up his career, for the most part. The details of his immoralities are so disgusting that no Christian pen would defile itself with their mention.[3]

Is it any wonder that Herod in Judea copied his Imperial Masters? The Slaughter of the Innocents of Bethlehem gives us an idea of the pagan ruler.

[1] Tacitus, Ann. 1. 73. Ann. 16. 6. Ann. 6. 6. Suetonius, Claud. 35.

[2] Suet. Vit. Aug.

[3] Suetonius, and classic writers of the period.

This same Herod, when about to die, summoned the principal men of Judea to official business at Jericho, and there had them shut up in the Hippodrome, and gave orders for their slaughter. He did this so that the joy at his death would be changed into mourning over the loss of the noblest sons of Israel.

Now Christianity informed these half-gods that they were sinners. It told them that, far from being a law to themselves, they would have to give an account of themselves and their authority to the Invisible Lord of the world. It told them that they held their power in trust as servants of the world Ruler, and that instead of being free to do as they liked, they were themselves subjects of a higher Power. In a word, it stripped them of their divine honors and of their divine irresponsibility. It made them descend from their pedestal and fall on their knees in adoration of a God of justice and purity.

When we consider the absolute power of pagan rulers, and how they crushed everybody and everything that interfered with their sway, we may get a faint idea of their attitude towards Christianity, which told them that they must obey a higher power like the rest of mankind. For they looked upon the rest of mankind as inferior beings. To be told, therefore that their subjects and their very slaves were equal with them before the Almighty Ruler

of the world was in itself sufficient to make them crush the innovation.

But Christianity did more than that, for it declared even to rulers that they were not their own masters. They could not be a law unto themselves, but must submit as their own subjects must, to a morality that struck at the root of their fondest pleasures and privileges.

We can form no idea whatever of the tremendous opposition the pagan rulers made to such a reform. It was not only a startling innovation, it was a most revolutionary and fundamental change of all existing and cherished notions. We must keep this in mind if we would appreciate the significance of Christianity's task to establish itself as the dominant religion of mankind.

Almost as great as this opposition of rulers was the opposition of the people themselves. The pagan peoples, except for their forced submission to their rulers, were a law unto themselves. There was no interior restraint on their passions and vices. Their idolatrous worship allowed them to give full play to every base inclination. Indeed, the very rites by which they worshipped their deities were associated with the most degrading and unmentionable immoralities.[4]

Every vice had some particular deity as its god.

[4] Tac. Ann. 3. 55–15. 44. Mart. Ep. 2. Suet. Ner. 16. Suet. Ner. 16.

Vice was open and unblushing. It is hard for us now-a-days to realize this state of things. It was real demon worship, whereby men committed the most dreadful and obscene acts while performing their devotions to their hand-made gods.

The licentiousness of the feasts of Bacchus and Ceres was so great that women were advised to keep away from them. It is impossible, by generalities, to give an idea of the vicious conditions which confronted Christianity.

If I specified the deeds of lust and degeneracy which were acts of public worship, in the most civilized nations of paganism, this book would be forbidden the mails. Things for which people would be arrested now were done publicly and openly, sanctioned by religion and state. We who live in a civilization which is Christian can form no idea of the horrible vice which prevailed everywhere before the establishment of Christianity. Some people are heard at times to say that the world is very bad now in spite of Christianity. Indeed it is bad enough. But compared to paganism it is paradise. A proof of this is the fact that I am ashamed to put in print even the bare enumeration of the immoralities associated with the public and official worship of paganism. I have before me data which if translated and published would shock the public sense of decency. What the pagans gloried in doing is so dreadful that Christians may not even speak of it.

This change in public morality was a revolution in the affairs of men impossible to effect by any merely natural means. Human effort had done its most, only to see degeneracy everywhere increasing.[5] Reform was impossible by human agency. It had to come from on high. This will appear very evident in the course of the perusal of these pages.

Christianity had to tell these votaries and habitues of vice that all this worship must stop, that instead of worshipping God, such rites were dishonoring Him. What a shock that must have been, not only to their traditions and beliefs, but also to their vile and lustful indulgences!

What chance had such a religion as Christ's against such a congenial and self-satisfying cult as paganism? Humanly speaking, none. As well expect a lily to bloom on a city pavement as Christianity to take root in the soil of paganism. And yet it took root! And after two thousand years, it is the most vigorous plant in the entire world. It has become a tree, whose branches have spread out into every nation of the world.

Something more than natural power must account for this phenomenon. What it is we shall see fur-

[5] Tac. Ann. 3. 55–15. 44. Mart. Ep. 2. Suet. Nero. Sen. Ep. 7. 2. Suet. Tib. 7. Dion. Cas. 60. 13. Tertul. Apol. 38. Aristot. Polit. 2. 9. Herod. 2. 46. Euseb. Prep. Evang. 2. 6. Kennet, Rom. Antiq. 64. Potter, Gr. Antiq. lib. 8, p. 581. Cicero, Tusc. Disp. 4. Sen. Ep. 95. Plato, lib. 1 de leg. Arnob. Adv. Gen. 4–7. Aug. De Civ. Dei. 7. 2.

ther on. At present we are merely considering that Christianity was the most striking and startling and fundamental change in the history of mankind. It was a revolution greater and more radical than any that ever occurred in history. What accounts for it?

Before coming to the explanation, we shall consider some other facts which attest that the religion of Christ was the most stupendous innovation known to mankind.

Paganism was not always and everywhere so bad or debased. Early Rome presents many instances of virtue. But paganism at the time of Christ, though at its highest as regards civilization, judged by worldly standards, was at its lowest as regards morality. That looks like a contradiction. To us it seems that civilization and morality should go hand in hand. That is because our idea of civilization is Christian.

But pagan civilization was different. It looked merely to material or æsthetic standards. In the time of Christ pagan culture, as regards literature, sculpture, architecture and government both civil and military, had reached its highest development. But in spite of this high degree of civilization, the morals of the people were indescribably low. The reason of it was that paganism flattered man and gratified his passions. That is why it took root and spread everywhere so easily. It never aimed at the chas-

tening of the spirit. It never tried to curb the evil inclinations of man's heart.

True, there were some noble exceptions, men of lofty mind and exalted views. These tried to stem the tide of immorality but failed to get a following, except a handful and for a time. Besides, they themselves, while inculcating virtue, very frequently practised their own pet vices, which were by no means small.

The very fact that some exceptional men endeavored to improve matters shows how bad things were. But no improvement was effected. On the contrary, vice became more flagrant, more degenerate, more widespread. At the beginning of the Christian era, it was a Niagara of iniquity. What could stop it? Nothing human. Human nature, left to itself, had shown what it was capable of. Regeneration was impossible unless from above.

Yielding to human passion had brought mankind into a condition of animalism. Rather, worse than animalism, for the animal does not go to excess. Instinct guides and checks. But man, although he had reason to guide and check him, turned traitor to reason when it sought to rule his passions. Passion ruled reason. The natural order was upset. Man, a spiritual and reasonable being, suffered himself to become carnal. Lust guided him rather than the light of conscience.

It was the outcome of debased idolatry. Genera-

tions of self-indulgence, living only for self, for pleasure, for every gratification within reach, had made man a god unto himself,— a law unto himself. Nothing stood between him and his selfish pursuits except force.

As St. Ignatius says in his wonderful book of the Spiritual Exercises, the whole world was given over to the worship of self in one form or another. Self was the great idol, and that was the attraction of idolatry. Man read his own self, his passions, his pursuits, his very crimes, into his self-made deities and fabricated his idols and their rites accordingly.[6]

In order that you may realize what a debasing hold idolatry had on the people, and what an obstacle it was to Christianity, I give the following data from authentic writers of antiquity:

Varro exclaims, "They call those gods, which if they had life would pass for monsters; yet they and their abominable practices are worshipped by law, and by rites which reproduce their abominations." [7]

Even Cicero bears witness to the baseness of idolatry. "Homer ascribed human actions and qualities to the gods; I had rather he had raised men to the imitation of the divine." [8] Augustine tells us that the highest gods were the most debased and their worship the most obscene.[9] From Arnobius we learn

[6] Sen. Oct. 379. Suet. Tib. 69. Tac. Ann. 3. 18.
[7] Apud, Civit. Dei, 6. 10.
[8] Tusc. 1. 26.
[9] De Civit. 7. 2.

that public plays performed as sacred rites in the worship of the gods, presented every conceivable obscenity and vicious excess.[10] These vile gods were worshipped by human sacrifice even in Greece and Rome.[11] At Sparta boys were whipped to death on the altar of Diana.[12] Everywhere lust and drunkenness were part of the obligatory worship of Bacchus and Venus.

Lactantius writes: "It is easy to see that the worshippers of false gods could not but be debased. For how could they be expected to be kept from shedding human blood, who worshipped gods that shed blood, as did Mars and Bellona? How could they spare even their own parent who adored Jupiter, who drove away his own father? How could they be merciful to their own infant children, who venerated Saturn the devourer of his children, and Juno who hurled out of Olympus her malformed offspring? How could rapine and fraud be avoided by men who knew the thefts committed by their god, Mercury? How could they restrain their passions who venerated Jove, Hercules, Bacchus and Apollo as gods, while their lusts and frightful lasciviousness of very blackest dye, were not only known to the learned, but brought out upon the stage of the theatres and made the choice material of songs that

[10] Adv. Gen. 7.
[11] Porphyr. Peri Ap. 2. Tac. Ann. 14, 3.
[12] Lucian, 2. 247.

everyone might the more surely know them? Could men be good under such training? To appease the god you adore you must do the things you know to be pleasing and agreeable to him. The most devout worshippers are those who seek to imitate their god. Thus truly did the worship of the gods destroy the morals of the heathen people." [13]

Modern historians thus comment on idolatry: "Some gods had animals offered to them, others had men sacrificed to them. The rites were for the most part senseless and ridiculous and commonly filthy, obscene and cruel. The festivals and solemnities were soiled with the most unclean profligacies and the greatest iniquities. It was allowable to practise these things even in the dwelling-places of the false gods. Vicious and most impious were the lives of the upper, middle and lower classes, and they committed with impunity crimes and horrors that decent ears cannot now bear to hear named.[14]

Grotius speaks as follows: "Almost everywhere on earth the pagan rites were full of cruelty, human blood was shed to appease the gods, nor did Roman laws prevent this. The most sacred solemnities of Ceres and Bacchus were filled with obscenity: Every day children were thrown out to die." [15]

And now Christianity appears to tell the pagan that he is fundamentally and radically wrong. It

[13] De Justitia, 5. 10.
[14] Mosheim, 1. 11.
[15] De ver. relig. 2. 11, 12.

dares to inform him that in his idol worship he is serving not God but Satan. Was there ever such a reform in the world as that? Was mankind ever so diametrically opposed in all that was congenial? What chance, humanly considered, had such a reform? Beforehand, any jury of reasonable men would have brought in a verdict of impossibility. But that very impossibility was accomplished.

Another feature of paganism was its treatment of women. From a human standpoint, this is its saddest aspect. Woman was merely a thing, a toy, an instrument for man's pleasure. Like a toy he could cast her aside whenever he chose. Woman, who has her youth and her beauty and her virginity for one lasting bestowal, saw how these were taken from her rudely, and that afterwards she was set aside, or thrown out, to make way for another who was younger and more beautiful.[16]

This was another phase of self-worship. Man, the stronger, gratified his lust, although it plunged the woman into despair and degradation. A woman in her youth gives herself to the man she loves. And when she has confided her youth and her beauty to him, she hopes also that he will have in keeping her old age and her fading charms.

The brutality of man towards woman in paganism brutalized woman also. But not having his strength

[16] Hor. Od. 3. 16. Suet. Oct. 34. Ov. Nux. 15. Tac. Ann. 13. 52. Plin. H. N. 14.

and his advantages, she could not assert herself as he did.

Women were slaves of man's lust. Tossed aside at his will, they became mere servants or worse in his household. Perhaps they were thrown out altogether. That was paganism's attitude towards woman. Forgetting that he owed his life to woman, man treated her as a piece of furniture or as one of his cattle,— perhaps not as well as some of his cattle.

The condition of woman was so bad that modesty forbids any but general mention of the matter. Standard writers refuse to employ the English language in describing the debasement of women in classic paganism. When they refer to the orgies and degradation of womankind they do so in Latin. That in itself is the worst possible indictment of the pagan treatment of women.

Marriage was a jest, children an accident or calamity. Hardly a Roman emperor in the classic era had a child as successor. That explains the widespread custom of adoption for inheritance and succession among the higher classes.

The most popular divinity was Venus, goddess of lust. Her shrines were everywhere, and always nearby her temples were her groves consecrated to lust. She was worshipped by the most obscene rites, thus giving the sanction of religion to the debasement of women.

The result of this degradation of women was that the family died out. Slaves outnumbered the citizens three to one. Cruelty follows lust. The women attended the gladiatorial shows, and joined with the men in calling for blood, and in refusing all mercy to the suppliant.

Cruelty followed towards woman herself. She was put to hard and degrading work, even into treadmills; there was hardly any sex distinction as regards labor. The mother or wife had no respect in the home or out of it. And it was all a legitimate effect of idolatry. The gods whom the people worshipped showed no respect for the goddesses. The lust and cruelty of Jupiter finally found expression in the license and hardheartedness of men toward women.

Christianity stood before man and told him that woman was his equal! Was that not a startling declaration to those accustomed for generations to regard women as merely the objects of their lust? And now the new religion condemns all that!

Woman must be your companion, it declared, she must be the object of your love, not of your lust. You must cherish and honor her as you do your very self. The woman who is your wife, she who gave you her heart, her youth and her beauty, she must be yours as long as life lasts. When age and lost beauty make her less attractive, her love, fostered by your love for her, must make her dearer and dearer to you. She must be the respected mother

of your children and the companion of your joys and sorrows.

Was there ever such a mandate laid on lustful man? We emphasize man throughout this consideration because man constituted pagan society. Woman did not count, for the most part. And it was for the conquest of man, pagan man, that Christianity set out. Not that woman was not also its aim, but its great obstacle was man, with his lust, his greed, and his vices of all sorts.

Another feature of paganism which Christianity had to confront was child murder. If for any reason a man did not care to be burdened with a child, he could throw it out of doors to die, or, if he preferred, he could strangle it.[17] He never consulted the mother's instinctive affection for her offspring or the rights of the child, but only his own wishes. It was self-worship over again, living only for self, idolatry.[18]

The life of an infant was not protected by any law or by public opinion of any nature.[19] Minitius Felix writes, "I see you expose your children to beasts and birds of prey or even wretchedly choke to death your own offspring." [20]

To those who, to spare themselves the sight of

[17] Aristotle, Politics, 7. 16.

[18] Plin. Ep. 4. 15. Tac. Hist. 5. 5. Juv. Sat. 6. 592. Ovid Amor. 2. 14. Suet. Oct. 65.

[19] Tac. 5. 5.

[20] Min. Felix, 30.

killing their own children, cast them out instead to die unseen, Lactantius says: "Is it not as cruel an act of murder to cast the fruit of your wombs out into places where dogs may devour them? No, — you will say, someone may take pity on the outcasts and keep and feed them. And what then? You have consigned your own flesh and blood either to slavery or prostitution." [21]

If in Rome, the mistress of civilization, children were thus murdered or consigned to slavery or prostitution, need we wonder that elsewhere they were offered as victims to Baal, Melcarth, Adramalech and many other idols like the frightful Moloch, who had a man's body and a bull's head?

In honor of Venus, worshipped together with Baal, children were tied up in sacks and flung from the pinacles of the temples.[22]

In Bosra, boys were slaughtered before a square black idol and their remains put under the idol.[23]

In Athens boys were forced to flay themselves before the goddess Artemis until their blood covered her idol.

These sacrifices inspired no horror. Cruelty and impurity go together. In the largest and most flourishing cities and among the better classes there was no protest against these savage practices.

Lactantius informs us that: When 200 children

[21] Lact. Justit. 1. 12.
[22] Dollinger, Heid. & Jud. 6. 4.
[23] Evag. H. E. lib. 22.

of the noblest families of Carthage were actually immolated to Moloch or Saturn, 300 more, not then wanted, were presented for the same purpose by their parents. ! ! ![24]

So long as paganism had its temples, the little ones had no protection against burning, exposure or infamy. Children were mostly the victims because they had no power of resistance. It was Satan worship, "Satan was a murderer from the beginning."[25]

Is it any wonder that Christ began the regeneration of the world by becoming an infant — and by honoring a virgin with the dignity of divine maternity! "Among pagans," says Justin, "children of both sexes and all ages were made acquainted with the demoralizing rites and worship of the pagan temples and festivals. Millions of unhappy boys and girls, the children of the poor, of the vicious, and the unfortunate, saw reason first dawn for them amid the gloom of those infamous receptacles, where the hand of a mercenary was wont to gather up the numerous bands of exposed children, and the bought-up children of the poor, along with the young captives taken, and there prepare them for the slave market or still more dreadful places."[26]

This dreadful crime was not merely tolerated but ordained by law and sanctioned by the greatest sages of paganism.

[24] Div. Inst. 21.
[25] Jn. 8. 44.
[26] Just. Apolog. 1.

Plato distinctly advocated a law to compel women beyond the prime of life to prevent childbirth. He also ordained that children who were born weak should be cast out to die of starvation.[27] Aristotle advocated a law to the same effect.[28] These represented the loftiest minds of antiquity. What they would enforce by law the people generally carried out of their own accord, strangling or exposing infants to suit their whims or convenience.

Seneca states that it was usual among the Romans to destroy weak and deformed children.[29]

Man looked upon it as his right to do what he wished with woman and with his offspring. Christianity challenged that right. It branded that right as it would murder. How startling that proclamation must have seemed to the hearers of the Gospel! What chance had any such doctrine to get a following among such men? Humanly speaking, none.

But the new religion went further. It put even greater restrictions on the ways of man.

Slavery among the pagans was a deeply rooted and widespread institution. Man looked upon slaves as chattels. They were something to be bought and sold or exchanged or destroyed at will.[30] Our idea of slavery is often confined to the notion that slaves

[27] Plato, Repub. 5. 461.

[28] Polit. 7. 15.

[29] De Ira, 1. 13.

[30] Plin. H. N. 33. 11–9. 23. Tac. 14. 42. Sen. Ep. 47. Juv. 6. 219.

were inferior to their masters, as were the African slaves. But that is not the idea of slaves as existing in paganism. Very often the slave was superior to his master.

In the days of the Empire, very frequently the slaves of Rome were the pronounced intellectual superiors of their masters. Slaves as known in modern times consist mainly of the victims of powerful raiders on a less defensible people, usually the unfortunate negroes. But slaves among the ancients were prisoners of war. Often they were in every respect the equals or superiors of their captors, but the chance of war made them prisoners.

Prisoners so taken were frequently either butchered or led into captivity and made slaves. The soldiers of a victorious army disposed of their prisoners as they would of other booty. They either killed them or kept them as slaves or sold them to the highest bidder. The master had the power of life or death over these unfortunates.[31]

Some of the more powerful Roman families had hundreds of slaves. At times, either for punishment or for the purpose of intimidation, hundreds were slain at once. Nor was this the attitude of the brutalized Roman only. Cato, the philosopher and teacher, advises the master to get rid of old furniture and old slaves, sickly slaves and sickly cattle.

There was a Roman legend which decreed that,

[31] Justinian, Institutes, 1. 3. 3.

bread being scarce at Rome, all the old men over sixty were drowned in the Tiber. In regard to this legend Niebuhr says, "an act of cruelty which so far from being unheard of among the pagans, is said to have been ordained by law in Ceos, and was extolled even beyond." [32]

Passing over other nations, which may be considered not so civilized, we shall confine ourselves to Rome and Greece. Plutarch in his life of Cato, the Censor, informs us that he used his slaves like so many beasts of burden and turned them off or sold them when they had grown old in his service! And Cato was the Censor of morals!

Suetonius states that slaves were put along with cattle in the treadmills used for raising water from the river.[33]

And who were the slaves? There were three classes: 1. War prisoners, often more cultured than their captors. 2. Homeless children, of Roman parents, thrown out to die and picked up by slave dealers. 3. Roman citizens who by poverty or debt sold themselves to the wealthy.

From these slaves, for the most part, the gladiators were chosen to fight to death for the amusement of the crowd. Also to fight with wild beasts. In these contests with beasts, the crowd, says Seneca, "became enemies of the human combatants and de-

[32] Rom. 2. 27.
[33] Vit. Calig.

sired nothing so much as to see them quickly slaughtered." [34]

Lactantius informs us that should one of each pair of gladiators not fall quickly the whole assembly flies into a rage against them and fresh couples must be brought out to despatch one another more speedily.[35]

Tertullian states that when the bloody spectacle was over, and the Roman knight, still longing for blood, returned to his palace, he supped on the flesh of bears and wild boars that had been fattened on human flesh and blood.[36] It was blood, blood and always the blood of *slaves!*

Lactantius declares that the gladiator when struck down cried in vain for mercy. The spectators voted for and demanded death, so completely had humanity became estranged from the human heart.[37]

This was among the polite nations of paganism. We may imagine what it was elsewhere. Two-thirds of the pagan world were slaves!

Against all this the voice of Christianity rang out: The slave is your brother, he has rights even as you have, his life is as sacred as yours, if he owes you service he does not owe you himself.

To the domineering and dominating Roman, what a startling statement! His very slaves not his to do with as he wills? Why is he master if he may not

[34] De Ira, l. 2.
[35] Inst. lib. 6.
[36] Apol. 9.
[37] Inst. lib. 6.

cut or kill or use as he likes? Did a reform ever face a bigger task? The religion of Jesus Christ stood up against this tide of human depravity.

Not only against the ill usage of slaves did it cry out, but also against the treatment of prisoners of war. Woe to the conquered! was the battle cry of paganism. And woe it was.[38] The conquered were frequently huddled together, men, women, children. If the victors had no need of prisoners, they could butcher on the spot every captive. If they chose to take captives for slavery, they picked out from among the men the clever and the strong, and from the women the young and beautiful. The rest, old men and women, the weak, the deformed, children and babes, might be put to the sword.

Against that barbarity, and it existed in the highest pagan civilization, Christianity cried out even to the proud military conquerors of the world: "Hold! you do wrong, such slaying is not war but murder, you must not kill!" Startling indeed, such an injunction to those Lords of the World. It was nevertheless the message of Christianity to the Rulers of paganism.

But Christianity went even further. It told the man on the throne that he was living in the presence of the Invisible Ruler of the world, and that whether or not he could deceive or impose upon his fellow man, he could never deceive or impose upon the Lord

[38] Sen. Oct. 379. Lucan. Phars. 1. 70. Tac. Ann. 42.

of the universe. And so it commanded virtue always and everywhere, and inculcated a personal responsibility for every action of life. What a law to those who were always a law to themselves! What a spiritual message to those who recognized only material things.

Furthermore, it declared that this Lord of the universe was a lowly Jew, a member of a despised and subject nation, who was crucified by order of a Roman Governor!

Lest the awful picture of paganism that has been given may seem to some to be over drawn, I here give the description of conditions as portrayed by St. Paul. We must remember that as a Christian and an Apostle his words are measured. Modesty forbade him to do more than merely touch on the dreadful evils of the heathen world.

Yet, reserved as it is, what an awful arraignment it is of pagan morality!

In the Epistle to the Romans he thus refers to the prevalent and open vices of the most civilized people of that era:

> And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds and of four-footed beasts and of creeping things.
>
> Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness: to dishonor their own bodies among themselves.
>
> Who changed the truth of God into a lie: and wor-

shipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this cause God delivered them up to shameful affections. For their women have changed the natural use, into that use which is against nature.

And in like manner the men also, leaving the natural use of woman, have burned in their lusts one towards another, men with men working that which is filthy, and receiving in themselves the recompense which was due to their error.

And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge; God delivered them up to a reprobate sense: to do those things which are not convenient.

Being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness; full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity; whisperers.

Detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents.

Foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy.

Who, having known the justice of God, did not understand that they, who do such things, are worthy of death: and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them.[39]

Contrast this condition of morals with the Sermon on the Mount, and you will realize that in very truth Christianity was the most startling reform ever introduced into the world.

And Jesus seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain.

And opening his mouth He taught them, saying:

[39] Rom. 23–32.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake.

Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven; for so they persecuted the prophets that were before you.

You have heard that it hath been said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy."

But I say to you, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and caluminate you:

That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and bad. and raineth upon the just and the unjust.

For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans this?

And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? do not also the heathens this?

Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." [40]

[40] Matt. 6.

That is the foundational teaching of the religion which set out to dispute the world with the votaries of pride, cruelty and lust. Truly it was the most startling innovation in the record of mankind.

That was how Christianity stood before the pagan world, seeking to make it her own. What chance had it? That the austere religion of Jesus Christ should supplant the congenial worship of paganism was a greater undertaking than anything recorded in human annals. It was such a stupendous project that even with every human aid it would be pronounced beforehand an impossibility.

Yet that undertaking was accomplished, and without human aids such as men rely on ordinarily. How was it done? This is not an academic question. It is a reality. It is a fact in the history of mankind. The pagan Roman Empire became Christian. The world dates its years now from the Founder of Christianity.

The fact is so well authenticated and so wonderful that it is one of the greatest wonders of the world. It is a miracle, something beyond the range of natural causes to effect or account for. Are you looking for a miracle in the modern world? Here it is,— Christianity itself, its foundation, its spread, its existence to this day. Into the material world of paganism it introduced the spiritual element that transformed mankind.

To do that, Christianity must have presented the

soundest credentials. Men were not gullible then to a greater extent than they are now. What induced them to change their whole outlook on life and their entire manner of living? Unless Christianity presented the very best credentials, it never could have effected its establishment.

We shall next proceed to the consideration of these credentials. But before doing so, we may remark again that such a startling innovation in the pagan world as Christianity, required the soundest credentials conceivable. To bring the haughty Roman to bow down before the Crucified and to accept the austere morality of the Cross required the strongest evidence in support of the religion of Jesus Christ.

And when we add that this change was effected without offering any human inducement sufficient to bring it about, we may readily realize that in the establishment of Christianity the hand of God was clearly manifested. Not only were there no worldly inducements offered for the acceptance of the new doctrine, but there was every human inducement against it. And yet it was accepted.

We know how hard it is to introduce an ordinary reform into a city, state or nation. But Christianity was the most extraordinary reform ever proposed. It was to reverse the world. It was to deprive a large body of pagan priests of their office and emolument. It was to curb the monarch on his throne and the citizen in his home. It was to per-

vade and alter society from its foundations up. It was to change the whole conception of life of a whole empire which embraced the whole civilized world. Can you conceive of a more startling innovation than that?

Sages and rulers had frequently endeavored to reform a handful of people in some ordinary matters, but had failed. And now, not sages or rulers, but a poor despised band of Hebrews go forth to reform, not their own people, but the nations of the earth. Was there ever a more startling project?

In order to understand the force and significance of the argument based on the establishment of Christianity, we must realize the hopelessness of the undertaking, humanly considered. It is only when we perceive that it was altogether the most gigantic achievement among mankind that we can appreciate the nature of the credentials which it must have presented in order to win over to it the allegiance of a hostile world.

We have shown that there were arrayed against the Christian ideal all the forces of government, national custom, religion, human passions and materialistic conceptions. No such array of opposing forces ever confronted an undertaking. Christianity set out not only to oppose that combination, but to win it over and make it its champion.

A startling proposition surely! And what is more startling, it was accomplished.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANITY'S NEED OF THE SOUNDEST CREDENTIALS

CHRISTIANITY came out of Judea. Its Founder was a person condemned as a criminal by a Roman tribunal. Its first preachers were despised Jews, of little education and culture, for the most part. Its doctrine put a restraint on human liberty and human passion. It opposed a worship which was part of the life of the people and the state. It offered no worldly advantages to those to whom it addressed itself. On the contrary, it declared that its acceptance meant, most likely, persecution, imprisonment, even death. As it progressed, its followers were imprisoned, exiled, tortured, killed.

How did austere Christianity persuade a sensual and degraded world to accept it? How did the spiritual religion of Jesus Christ take root in the material world? Why did men embrace a religion whose acceptance frequently implied chains, exile and death? How do you explain it?

Augustine, one of the greatest minds this world

has known, asked that question in his time, some sixteen hundred years ago. He was a pagan. He had the viewpoint of paganism. But the spectacle of Christianity arrested his attention. How could this Thing get a foothold in the world?

At length he exclaimed: "Christianity is a miracle!" He reasoned that for the establishment of such a religion divine power was required. There could be no human explanation for it. Either miracles were wrought to found this religion, or a greater miracle presented itself, the establishment of such a religion without miracles.

And thus it was that one of the greatest sages of the world was led into the examination of the credentials of Christianity. His examination led him to be a Christian. His conversion, and the consequent effect on him, led him to be a champion of Christianity.

Now if a man like Augustine, who was so much closer to the source of Christianity than we are, and so much mightier of intellect than most of us, if a man of his keen and sceptical mind, filled moreover with the prejudices of paganism, if he found that the credentials of Christianity were sound, the soundest conceivable, we may surely feel that they have not lost any of their force by the confirmation of so many centuries. Rather, they have gained strength by the continued existence and spread of Christianity.

Now what are the credentials of Christianity? What induced pagan mankind to renounce paganism and embrace the religion of Jesus Christ?

By credentials we mean the evidence which makes us put credit in a thing; the proofs which attest the truth of a thing. Whatever those credentials were, they must indeed have been very clear and strong to bring about such a change as that from paganism to Christianity.

You know how you require evidence for the soundness of a business proposition if you are to risk your capital in it. If you are a man of ordinary business insight, you will not risk a considerable sum of money on an enterprise without receiving good assurances that the project is as represented. You use every precaution to safeguard your investment. And rightly so.

But if instead of your money you were to put your entire business and fortune into a venture, how very slow and careful you would be. But going further, suppose you were embarking on a venture not only your possessions, but your very life and all you held dear! Then you would require the soundest credentials.

Now when Christianity confronted paganism it demanded of it a complete surrender. Paganism was not an abstract doctrine,— it was a concrete creed. It permeated the nation, the family, the individual. Government was built on it, society was

formed by it, and the individual regulated his life by it.

Paganism was a tremendous fact. It was a world power. It dominated everything. Besides, it was agreeable, exceedingly so. It pleased everybody. It imposed no unpleasant duties. Rather, it put a premium on one's own pleasures and made a virtue out of the indulgence of one's vices. This was the pagan Goliath that confronted the Christian David.

There was some proportion between the shepherd boy and his huge opponent. Skill was pitted against size. But there was no proportion between the contenders when Christianity confronted paganism. Paganism had power, wealth, learning, prestige, position and possession on its side. Christianity had nothing, humanly speakly. Yet it demanded the complete surrender of paganism! Can you conceive of a more startling proposition?

If Christianity had nothing to offer, humanly speaking, what then must have been her credentials to induce such a colossus to give way before her, or rather to join her? It is clear as day that unless the religion of Christ presented to the pagan world the soundest credentials for her mission, she never could have converted the Roman Empire. She never could have taken captive such world forces and transformed them into her own devoted adherents.

That is what she did. And she did it although the transformation meant that the pagan surrendered

what was dearest to his heart. And this he did, moreover, in order to submit himself to what human nature recoiled from,— ostracism, persecution, prison, death. Christianity's credentials must have been wonderful to effect such a change. For no cause ever demanded so much from mankind as Christianity did.

Human nature is fundamentally the same always. The pagans had, even more than ourselves, the love of pleasure and liberty. They were as strongly attached to the worship and ways of their forefathers as we are. Nevertheless they subordinated their pleasure and their liberty to the teaching of Christ, and they gave up their ancestral religion and customs for an innovation from a strange and despised land. There is nothing comparable to that in the history of mankind.

To bring it about some marvelous cause must be assigned. And since no human power was adequate, it remains that there must have been a divine cause at work. And this is the very point of the entire matter. Turn and twist as you like, you cannot evade the issue that to get a foothold at all in the world Christianity had to show divine. Her credentials had to be divine since there were none that were human.

She had neither power nor prestige. She had no earthly rewards to offer and no worldly gains to propose. Yet she established herself in an element that

was opposed to her by all the forces of the world. What is the answer? She presented convincing testimony for her claims. Unless she did, the men of the day never would have accepted her.

In the beginning every inch of her progress was contested. But, proving her claims as she advanced, she enrolled such an army of adherents that they in turn became one of her best credentials. But to win over that army of followers one by one, was the result of the convincing proofs which she offered for her mission. Her credentials were so convincing that they left serious men little or no choice. That is why she drew to her standard millions and millions, although in becoming hers they had frequently to face exile, imprisonment and death.

We keep coming back to this point because it is paramount. Once realize the task Christianity set herself, and you become convinced that her establishment proves her divinity.

Men do not assume hard duties and grave responsibilities for slight reasons. But converts from paganism assumed more than hard duties and grave responsibilities. They were regarded as enemies of the state and of the gods. They were despoiled of their possessions, cast out from the society of those they loved, and frequently maimed and tortured, just because they were Christians.

Some were burned alive, some thrown to the beasts in the arena, some beheaded, some tied in sacks with

serpents and drowned in the sea. Others were made lame and forced to work in the mines, or put aboard rotten vessels and sent out into the deep to a watery grave. In a thousand ways and by thousands they were scourged, maimed and butchered. Yet their ranks were constantly filled up.

What was the attraction? Certainly nothing human. It was therefore divine. There can be no possible question about it. For they who thus gave up everything and incurred suffering, privation and death were not only women and children, not only slaves and the aged. They were scholars and merchants and soldiers and legislators.

The greatest scholars and sages adorn the ranks of early Christianity. Besides, no braver men ever lived than those who during the first three hundred years of Christianity made up her adherents. Driven by persecution, they worshipped in cave and catacomb. Threatened with dire punishment, they stood firm and professed their faith before judges and emperors. It is estimated that from nine to eleven millions of men and women were martyred for the faith in the first three centuries.

Could any undertaking not divine survive that assault? If we want to be reasonable at all, how can we behold such an effect without admitting a divine cause?

It is very easy for some scientists, and philosophers so-called, and infidels to put forth their various

and changeable theories against the credibility of Christianity. But here is a fact. Christianity was established. And its establishment was beyond any human power to effect. A divine power therefore explains its establishment. Now a divine power cannot operate in favor of error, therefore Christianity is true.

If the religion of Christ offered great worldly inducements we might understand its success. But it offered none whatever. On the contrary, every worldly consideration advised against it. This fact has been the greatest stumbling-block to the opponents of Christianity.

The infidel Gibbon wrote his prodigious work on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire in order to offset the force of this fact. And what did he accomplish? Every chapter only serves to bring out the Christian argument stronger. A man of analytic mind cannot read Gibbon, and others of his kind, without thereby getting stronger evidence for Christianity. Balmes shows this truly in his "History of European Civilization." Only superficial readers and those unacquainted with real history and human nature can be misled by Gibbon and men of his type.

Others, like Voltaire, have tried ridicule. But all the scorn and ridicule of the centuries cannot offset that tremendous fact of history, the establishment of Christianity. Against fire and sword gentle Chris-

tianity pushed on and on until it conquered Rome and sat enthroned in the lofty place of the Cæsars.

For Christianity to do that it was necessary, from all we know of human nature, to have the right kind of credentials. Credentials they must have been which bore the closest scrutiny from every quarter for years and years, and from the keenest minds the world has known. What were those credentials?

Before specifying them, we shall remark that necessarily they were divine. Christianity had to show divine. She had no human credentials; just the reverse,— every human consideration was against her. She came from a despised and hated quarter, she was announced by poor and insignificant advocates for the most part, she preached a crucified Jew as her Founder, she inculcated the necessity of restraint, penance and mortification, she told plainly that persecution and death might be the fate of her followers.

What then had she to present in order to gain her millions of adherents? Is it not clear what the great Augustine said: either Christianity proved her claims by miracles, or she is herself a greater miracle than any she claims? That is logic for a thinker. That is an argument for those would-be philosophers who claim to follow reason as their guide and god! Yes, they follow it when it leads them to what they want.

Two main reasons may be assigned for the rejec-

tion of the credentials of Christianity, ignorance of them or a dislike for them. Ignorance excuses those who are not capable of knowing. Dislike for credentials excuses no man. If a tax collector comes to your door to collect a part of your income for the government, you may dislike him and his credentials, but you pay your taxes if he shows he is authorized to collect them. Why? You are obliged to. The government compels you.

But that is the difference. God does not compel us,— in this life. He leaves us free because He made us so. But He presents evidence for His cause that is sufficient to give us certainty about it. He does not present evidence that will compel our acceptance, for to do so would be to force us, and that He will not do. He made us free agents and will judge us by the manner in which we have used our freedom.

He could give us compelling evidence if He chose, but then there would be no choice on our part, no possibility of an act of faith. There is no choice in chemistry or mathematics. There, evidence is compulsory. There is no merit in believing that two and two make four.

So the credentials of Christianity are sufficient to produce reasonable certainty, but not physical certainty. You are reasonably certain, for instance, that when you sit down to dinner at home your mother has not poisoned your food. You are rea-

sonably certain of that, but you are not physically certain. A chemical analysis would be necessary to produce physical certainty.

Mankind lives for the most part by reasonable certainty. If we were to wait for absolute certainty, the world would be at a standstill. We should never board a train or boat before first getting a demonstration that the engineer was capable and reliable. We should spend our lives investigating and never accomplish anything.

God made us reasonable beings, and He wants us to act on reasonable certainty. And we do in all the events of life. He wants us to do the same in regard to religion. And if we look into the credentials of Christianity, we shall find that they are certain with the same certainty, and greater, than we have for most of the things that concern us. This will appear very clearly when we present these credentials.

From the very nature of the case, we must look for most extraordinary credentials in regard to Christianity. It was the greatest innovation in the world. No such transition has occurred before or since. We can understand a change from bad to worse. That takes care of itself. It is easy to go down hill. But Christianity was a change which revolutionized the individual and society. It obliged man to rise above himself and his weaknesses and his passions. It imposed an absolutely different life on all who embraced it, a life which, in the earlier centuries, im-

plied everything that was strange to human nature.

We who are now accustomed to Christian ways can form no idea of what the new life meant to the early Christians. It was a tremendous transformation and a very great sacrifice. And this is what makes its establishment an argument so strong for Christianity. For people in large numbers and over a long period do not make great sacrifices without a sufficient motive.

We are justified, therefore, scientifically and logically in stating that the credentials presented by Christianity were the truest, the strongest, the most unassailable, the most convincing possible. They had to stand the light of day for years and centuries. The people who gave up paganism for Christianity were taking the most serious step known to mankind.

We can understand how an individual here or there might take such a serious step without due guarantees. But that millions who were hostile to the very idea of Christianity should not only cease their hostility to it but take up its standard and die for it, is incomprehensible unless the Christian credentials were all that is claimed for them. There is no way out of it.

I know I am repeating the argument with slight variations, but I do it to drive it home. I do it to show that unless a man is ignorant or prejudiced he must, if he wants to be logical, scientific and reasonable, accept these credentials.

In themselves they are of their very nature so overpowering that it is hard to see how anybody not ignorant nor prejudiced can say he is in good faith and reject them. If a man is half honest with himself, he cannot take a stand against those master minds of early Christianity who saw the credentials and weighed them and tried to find a flaw in them but could not.

Tertullian, Origen, Justin, Ambrose and Augustine, and a host of others, whose superiors the world has not known, examined Christianity's credentials and accepted them. They accepted them when to do so meant the greatest renunciation conceivable. They accepted them when to do so made them not only alter their views, but their lives.

Now I do not mean to say that the Christian credentials compel belief. That were to make Christianity a proposition of geometry. Faith is not a matter of absolute evidence, but of sufficient evidence to the man of good will. This good will must be shown by giving these credentials at least the attention bestowed on other serious matters of life. That is not asking too much when there is a question of a matter which concerns not only life, but eternal life.

You give good inquiry to matters of money and business and society. The soul is more than all these. You give time and inquiry to politics and public questions. Christianity is the most important

subject ever introduced into the life of mankind. It is not a matter of the past. It is a living issue. It concerns you.

Christ said He came for you, for you personally. He said He established His religion for you, for you personally. He said He died on the Cross for you, for you personally. Did He or did He not? Does that not concern you? Is it not a bigger question than money or honor or power. When you stand before Him in judgment and plead as an excuse that you had time and inclination for everything and anything except the one thing necessary, what will He say?

I am speaking direct to you, O man, because God's message was to you and you cannot be indifferent to it except at the risk of your eternal welfare. Do you want to risk that? Have you, to be candid, looked into this matter of the credentials of Christianity half as seriously as you have investigated other things? Have you ever thought it worth while?

Millions of martyrs thought it worth while to die for what those credentials stand for. Hundreds of millions for hundreds of years have thought it worth while to live for and by the religion established by those credentials. And you? Can you afford to be indifferent?

We declare beforehand that the magnitude of the Christian claims demands the best credentials ever given for anything in this world. These credentials

will be placed before you. We are frank to admit the necessity of the soundest credentials. May we not ask of you also a frank consideration of them?

Christianity is truth. It courts scrutiny. The stronger the light thrown on it the clearer will appear its claims. But the light must be the white light of judicial inquiry, not the colored light of prejudice.

CHAPTER III

A JUDICIAL EXAMINATION OF THE CREDENTIALS

WHEN a matter is vital and concerns ourselves, we are very poor judges in the case. The reason is because we are apt to see only what we want to see.

A good physician will very rarely undertake the treatment of one of his own family in a critical illness. His love and solicitude are a handicap. He will see things either too favorably or too unfavorably. It is so with a lawyer. The best legal minds realize the advantage of consultation with other lawyers in a case which concerns themselves. No matter how capable the lawyer may be, if his own interests are at stake he is apt to overlook what is most important and fail to see the strongest points of his opponent.

To illustrate this. Two legal lights may be engaged in a personal lawsuit. Each may feel certain that the right is on his own side. And each will be convinced that the other side is wrong. Why? It may be that there are two sides to the matter, but usually it is because the two are intensely and differently interested. In the course of the lawsuit the

arguments and evidence of one side will not persuade the other. Neither side will weigh the statements and facts of the other side impartially. They will view each other's evidence with a mind opposed to it.

What is the result? The decision must rest with a judge. But even after a fair judicial hearing and decision, one party will commend the decision and the other will condemn it. But the judgment stands. The court will uphold the decision. Otherwise there would be no end to litigation.

A man with a theory can see almost anything,— if it supports his theory. Also such a man will be blind to the most evident fact,— if it refutes his theory. The wish is father to the thought. We have all met people with whom it is useless to argue.

Now, of all things on which men have set views, religion comes first. The reason is that religion means more than anything else to a man. Religion, unless it is merely nominal, goes right down into a man's way of living. It is a vital matter.

Consequently a man of fixed religious views is the hardest person in the world to persuade in regard to opposing views. He will not look at them fairly. Often he is hardly able to do so. Tradition, association, family ties, worldly interests, form a mist before his mental vision which prevents him from seeing aright. That is one reason why the credentials of Christianity must have been so sound and so wonderful to win over the hostile pagan mind.

Those same credentials we are going to present to you. No matter what your attitude of mind may be, it is not half so antagonistic as was the pagan mind. The evidence is even greater for you than it was for the pagan, because you have the great test of all true things,— time. Nothing dissolves error so surely as time. But time has only confirmed the Christian credentials, as we shall show.

Now I ask you to consider these evidences of Christianity with a judicial mind. Do not start off by saying that the position of the other side is impossible. Try to be seated as a judge and weigh the evidence on its merits. That is not asking too much from a fair-minded man.

If you do not wish to be classed as prejudiced, or ignorant, or indifferent, you certainly should be willing to give Christianity the same attention and fairness that you would give a matter of ordinary importance. If you are not willing to do that, you cannot say you are in earnest about the greatest thing of life. The greatest thing it is, for millions have attested it by the greatest sacrifices known to mankind.

Every institution and undertaking must have proper credentials to assure its success. These credentials must be of a character which harmonizes with the thing in question. If it is a mining proposition, its promoters will go to the financial centres and endeavor to get capitalists interested. The credentials will be evidences of the ore, its quality and

quantity, the titles to the claim, transportation facilities, and other such things associated with the mining industry.

If the project, on the other hand, is the establishment of a newspaper in some new town, or of another paper in a town that already has one or several, the credentials for the enterprise will be of an altogether different character. In order to get financial backers, the promoters of this undertaking will have to show that there is a field for the class of readers they aim at acquiring. Also they must give evidence that they have or may get a staff of writers who can furnish the sort of news and views that will appeal to the class of readers they hope to reach. Besides this, they must also furnish evidence that there will be enough business support from the merchants of the place to guarantee the project's success.

The credentials in both these undertakings are, as you observe, of an entirely different character. The mining proposition must furnish material proofs of its claims,— the ore, the land, titles, the right of way, and such. The publishing proposition must give assurances just as convincing but of an altogether different character in keeping with the nature of the undertaking.

Christianity is a supernatural institution. It claims a divine origin and character. Its credentials must be in accordance with its nature. Unless it can give divine evidence, it has no right to get a hearing.

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Its foundation is supernatural. So must its credentials be. We must look therefore for miraculous confirmation of its claims. That is as clear as day.

The credentials of Christianity being of a supernatural or miraculous character, some people refuse to consider them at all, because they do not believe in miracles. Such an attitude is to pass judgment before weighing the evidence. It is not judicial, but prejudicial. It is not scientific.

A hundred years ago who would have believed in telegraph, telephone, phonograph, wireless, submarine and airship? If a hundred years ago you had put these matters before a jury of rationalists or scientists, they would have said: Impossible! If a thousand years ago you declared that the world was round, you would have been put down as crazy. How could people on the under side hold on? And so of lots of things.

Man, by discovering one of nature's secrets, gives us a scientific miracle. Why may not God, who not only knows all nature's secrets, but moreover created them, do something which to us seems impossible? If nature is not subject to Him, is He nature's God? If creation does not obey Him, is He master of creation?

If therefore God, the Creator and Master of the world, wishes the forces of the world to do His bidding, why should they not obey? As Ruler of the world must He fold His arms and acknowledge that

some of His creations are not subject to His will? Those who deny the possibility of miracles strip the Master of creation of His mastery. They limit the power of the Illimitable Cause of all things.

You will say that such an attitude towards God is absurd. So it is. Why then do some men, in the name of science, take that stand? I may ask you why do some men, in the name of science, say we come from monkeys? It suits their theories. They set out to fight the Christian idea and welcome anything that helps them. Christianity declares we came from the hand of God, who breathed into us an immortal soul. They deny such an origin and assert that we came from monkeys.

The transition from monkey to man was the culmination of Darwin's theory. Some scientists approved the arch without the keystone. Why? It suited their theories; it helped on their attack against Christianity. Do you suppose those scientists would have accepted Darwin's teaching if it stood by itself and was not an argument against revealed religion? They would have laughed it out of existence.

Yet, some years ago, if you did not believe in Darwinism, you were put down as unprogressive and ignorant. Today, the leading scientists of the world reject Darwinism. It was swallowed whole by some intelligent people because it was the diet they wanted. And yet with all the prestige of science, it has gone forever, like so many other similar certainties.

The credentials of Christianity did not give people what they wanted, yet they were so convincing that, on the strength of them, the world of that day accepted Christianity. And it did not have its day, as Darwinism and a hundred other isms. It is existent today, and very much so, throughout the entire world.

Now please approach the investigation of these credentials in a spirit worthy of yourself and of the great establishment they concern. All through the ages the master thinkers have declared that nothing in the history of the world arrests human attention as much as Christianity. Literature's loftiest and most abundant efforts have been spent on this subject. It is therefore worth *your* while.

Most projects concern temporal and worldly interests. This goes beyond the confines of the world and reaches out into eternity. If you make a mistake in other matters, you may repair it. If you reject Christianity, you take a stand which may affect you unalterably for time and eternity.

In such a case, if you are in doubt at all, does not prudence dictate the safe side? Even if the credentials were not as sound as they are, would they not command your respect on account of their infinite consequences? If your life were in danger and a means of saving it were at hand, would you reject it because you could conceive of the possibility of a

slightly better means? No, you would take what promised safety, if you loved your life.

Christianity declares to us that we are immortal, that this life is only our first step, that our immortality depends on how we take that step, and that she is qualified to direct us how to take it.

If you were making a journey over a mountain-pass and did not know the way to your destination, would you reject the directions of a guide because he pointed out a way that was difficult?

If you are not prepared to weigh the claims set forth by Christianity in a fair and judicial way, do not proceed at all. But if you are willing to investigate the strongest credentials of any institution in the world, then I invite you to do so. But do not presume to throw the case, and such a case, out of court beforehand by setting yourself against the very thing which is in question.

If you deny that it is possible for a man to be nine feet high, of course there is no use presenting you with evidence of his height. If you deny the possibility of the supernatural, there is no use giving you evidence of the supernatural. But that is not the scientific way of going about things. Scientists and sages examine the evidence and decide that a thing is possible if they have evidence of its existence.

Wireless was believed an impossibility some years ago. Evidence declares it possible. Evidence of

the miraculous is just as much entitled to acceptance. What Christianity asks is the same examination of her evidence that we give to other things.

If we find that there are sure grounds for believing the Gospel narrative, then we must believe it, even if it contains the miraculous. We must not go on the basis that because a thing is contrary to our views it cannot be so. The sane thing to do is to see if our views are right. If a fact goes against our views, the fact stands, our views fall.

If it can be established by critical investigation that the Gospels are as true a record as any document of history, they are entitled to as good credit as any document of history. If we reject such a document, we must reject every document, and the whole past would be but a huge fiction.

If there is as good evidence for the Gospels as there is for Cæsar's Commentaries, we should accept them. In point of fact, the Gospels have much better evidence in their behalf, as we shall see. If people went on the principle that no man could do what was attributed to Cæsar and thus rejected his narrative, there would be no history. The point to consider is not what we think he could do, but the evidence of what he did. That evidence is abundant, independently of his own account.

Beforehand a man might deny the possibility of Napoleon's career. It reads like a romance. Yet the reality far surpassed the wildest romances of

literature. If it occurred two thousand years ago, we might say it was a huge fabrication. Yet no fabrication compares with the actual achievements of this colossus of modern days. Cæsar and Napoleon and Alexander are miracles of humanity.

If God for His own reasons employed these human agents, men of exceptional power in the intellectual world, why should He not employ exceptional agencies of the material world for the accomplishment of the most exceptional work in the annals of mankind? That is what we should expect. If God was to establish a new supernatural relation between earth and heaven, we should expect a supernatural manifestation of such a purpose.

So far then from regarding the miraculous as out of place in the establishment of Christianity, we should rather be surprised if it were not there. But to say beforehand that, since Christianity postulates the miraculous, you refuse to consider it because you do not believe in the miraculous, is an unscientific and illogical way of proceeding. It is not a judicial examination of the case, but a prejudicial discarding of it.

In ordinary matters we despise a prejudiced person. We know he is impossible. Now if you analyze the word prejudice, what do you find? It means advance judgment, judging before you get the evidence. It comes from the two Latin words *pre* and *judicium*. *Pre* means before or in advance of,

— *judicium* means judgment or decision. Now to judge before weighing the evidence is a judgment that is called prejudiced.

That is the sort of judgment those pass on Christianity who refuse to consider her credentials on the ground that they are of a supernatural or miraculous character. Of course they are. If they were not, the whole structure would be foundationless. For the principles and foundation of the Christian religion are not natural but supernatural.

You may say that it is one thing to assert this, but another to prove it. Very true. That is why we propose to prove it by presenting the Christian credentials.

These credentials are all such that they fall under human observation and inspection. There is nothing hidden or dark about them. The facts are open to the closest scrutiny. Those facts we shall produce and then challenge an explanation. If no human or natural agencies can be assigned as the cause, it is logical, scientific and necessary to assign a higher cause, and that we call the supernatural or miraculous.

Is there anything about this procedure, fair-minded man, that a sensible person can reasonably object to? If the opponents of religion refuse to meet her on such a field, are they not already defeated!

The Jews rejected the Messiah because they would not believe He was Jehovah. Jesus appreciated their

high notion of the deity and commended them for it. He sympathized with their position. He knew their awful reverence for God and how hard it was for them to identify a human being with the Creator.

But He proceeded in a scientific way. He told them how wonderful was God, and more than affirmed their great idea of Jehovah. But He also proceeded to do the things which only the Almighty and Infinite Creator could do.

From nothing to something is a transition which is infinite. There is no measure between nothing and something. To bridge over that chasm requires infinite power and intelligence. That was the character of creation in the beginning when God by His word made all things out of nothing.

If infidels reject that idea of creation, the Jews did not, and it was to them Christ addressed Himself when presenting His credentials. To show them that He had creative power, and that consequently He was God, He accomplished by His word only, in their very presence things so wonderful that He could point to them and say: "If you do not believe me, at least believe the works which I do."

These works they did not deny. But, like the modern opponents of Christianity, they were prejudiced against Him, and since they could not deny His miracles, they attributed them to occult influences.

Jesus, by His word only, created sight in the

blind, in those born blind; He called back to life Lazarus, who was dead four days and whose body was already offensive from corruption. Thousands of Jews saw these miracles and many others. They never denied these facts. But they did not consider them judicially, but prejudicially.

And that is what many do today, and for that reason they reject Christianity as the Jews rejected Christ. It is for this reason that before presenting the credentials of Christianity, it is necessary to insist on a judicial examination of them.

If Christianity did not entail such consequences in man's life and view of life, there would be no need of insisting on this unprejudiced review of the evidence in its case. In examining the documents of Rome or Greece men are dispassionate. The result of their labors is only academic. But on their acceptance or rejection of Christianity there hangs, not an academic, but a living result.

They may say that classic Greece and Rome deal not at all with the miraculous. Why therefore should Judea? Because Greece and Rome gave us only human institutions, but out of Judea came the divine and the divine postulates the miraculous. If there were not miracles associated with Christianity, it should be rejected. Yet some modern sages reject it because of the miraculous.

Miracles are the trade mark of the supernatural. As Christianity claims to be supernatural, she could

be rejected if she had not the trade mark of the supernatural, which is miracles. Now just because she has the trade mark of her origin and character, for that very reason the opponents of the miraculous find fault. If she did not show miraculous, they would find greater fault. But there would be no need of that, for she never would have existed to challenge their investigation if she were not endowed with the miraculous.

If you should ask a rationalist if it were possible to accept an institution as divine without divine evidence, he would say: Certainly not. If you should ask him if it were possible or not for the Master of creation to do something divine on earth, he would be obliged to say it must be possible, otherwise the Head of creation would not be the head.

You behold, therefore, that the stand against the miraculous is neither scientific, logical nor judicial. Anyone who denies that the Creator can interfere with His own work is refusing to Him what they must grant to the ordinary designer or workman.

You will say that this argument postulates a personal God. Yes, it does. If you do not believe in a personal God, this treatise is not for you. But the next time your child asks you who made your watch, tell him it made itself. For the denial of a personal God means the same as regards the world.

Bringing therefore a judicial mind to the investigation of the credentials of Christianity, I trust you

will consider and weigh facts. Do not color or distort or read anything into them. Just regard what occurred and ask yourself could any natural cause produce that effect? If the effect transcends all natural agency, be honest and scientific, and admit that a cause higher than nature is at work, a supernatural cause. And since a supernatural cause is evidence of divinity, accept the effect as divine.

If we proceed thus, we shall see that the establishment of Christianity is a divine fact, that the religion of Jesus Christ is divine, that in following that religion, we are in the pathway that leads truly and securely to God, our Father in heaven.

CHAPTER IV

THE GOSPELS AS A HISTORIC DOCUMENT

NO reasonable person would reject Christianity if he believed the Gospel account true. For therein Jesus Christ solemnly states that He is God, and moreover proves His statement by divine deeds. Why then did the Jews reject Him, for they were witnesses of all that the Gospels record?

They were indeed witnesses, but they did not see Christ in the white light of reality, but in the colored light of their own passions and ambitions. We know how a person may see green or yellow or red if he looks through glass of those colors. And that is what the Jewish leaders did, as we shall see. But the people at large, who saw things right, believed in Christ and acclaimed Him the Messiah.

It was otherwise with the leaders, who were rabidly antagonistic to Christ and His mission. They rejected Him because He did not give them what they wanted. They looked for a worldly king and worldly glory. He offered them an eternal King and a heavenly kingdom.

And why were they not eager to receive an eternal

King and a heavenly kingdom? Because they had their hearts set on the things of this world and refused to hear Jesus aright or to see Him aright.

Moreover, Christ upbraided them for their vices and especially for their pride and hypocrisy. He showed them to the people as oppressors and deceivers, and they realized that if He prevailed they would lose their power and their prestige. That made them hate Him, as vicious men always hate the just man who discerns and flays wrong doing. In their rage and disappointment they saw Christ by a distorted vision.

For that reason He called them blind. Having eyes they saw not, He declared, and having ears they heard not. Oh, they saw and heard, but in the same way that an opponent in a lawsuit sees and hears the evidence and arguments of the other side.

Jesus gave all the evidence that was sufficient to convince them, but He did not force them to accept it. Many did accept it. The people as a whole acclaimed Him the Messiah. They were not prejudiced, at least not to the extent of the Scribes and Pharisees.

At a council of these opponents of Jesus, one of them arose and said: "Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold the whole world is gone after Him." [1] The terrible example of these misleaders of the people should give us a wholesome fear of

[1] John, 12. 19.

being carried away by passion in our judgment.

Now it is possible to reject the Gospels just as it was possible for the Jews to reject Christ, and for the same reasons. That is why I insist so much on a *judicial* and not a *prejudicial* investigation. We shall put before you, therefore, the Gospels, and ask you to consider their claims, just as Jesus asked the Jews to consider His.

In passing, let me say, is it not a wonderful tribute to the truth of the Gospels that they narrate this rejection of Jesus by His own people? Nothing could injure the cause of Christianity more, naturally speaking, than to announce that its Founder was rejected by His own. This just in passing, and as a straw to indicate how the wind of truth blows through the pages of the sacred narrative.

If the Gospels are a true historical record, they are a credential for Christianity better and sounder than any credential ever presented for anything else in this world. We propose to demonstrate that we have better grounds for accepting the truth of the Gospels than we have for that of any book handed down to us.

We shall show that if we reject the Gospels as a true narrative, we must by the same procedure reject all history. On account of the seriousness of the matter before us, we shall apply even more severe tests to the Gospel narrative than we should to any other.

The first proof we give that the Gospels are true is that in all the heat and bitterness of the strife between the early Christians and their opponents, it was never charged that the Gospels were not true.

First, there was the terrible struggle against the Jews. If ever there were fanatics, the Jewish leaders were such. They realized that the success of the new religion of Christ meant the death of all their claims and prerogatives. It meant the end of their vision of worldly power. It meant the subversion of all that they had constructed on their carnal expectations.

What was their best weapon of attack? Why, to show that the Gospel narrative was not true. Did they do so, or even attempt to do so? Absolutely not. In all the charges and assaults of the Jews against Christianity, and they were many and bitter, not one suggestion is made against the truth of the Gospel narrative.

That is most remarkable. The Jews were right on the ground. They had more interest in disproving the Gospel facts than the unbelievers of our day, yet they made no attempt to discredit a single recorded occurrence.

That they would eagerly deny the Gospel truth if they could is evidence from the fact that previously they tried to lie in regard to the Resurrection.[2] But they were caught at it, and that too is recorded in

[2] Matt. 28. 12.

the Gospel.[3] This shows that if they did not assail the Gospel truths, it was not because they did not want to. But they could not, so they made no attempt, after the sorry failure in regard to the Resurrection.

When we consider that the religion of Christ could have been discredited in its infancy by substantiating one one-hundredth part of the charges now made against the veracity of the Gospels, we marvel that no such attempts were ever made.

The attempt to discredit the Resurrection shows how eager the Jews were to destroy the evidence of Christianity if they could. Another instance is also in the Gospel itself, where they tried to kill Lazarus because he was the living evidence of his own resurrection.[4] That shows that they would stop at nothing to discredit the cause of Christ.

Yet with all their animosity, the Jews never made a charge which called in question the veracity of the Gospels. They tried other means to upset the new religion, but never did they assail the Gospel truth. Now that fact alone, under the circumstances, is as strong a proof for the truth of the Gospels as could be demanded.

Let us see by an example just what this fact signifies. Suppose you were a stranger from the mining districts of the West, and that you came to New York with plenty of money and little of the nice

[3] Matt. 28. 16. [4] John, 12. 10.

ways of society. You intended to establish yourself right on Fifth Avenue among the very élite. They do not want you, they put every obstacle in your way, they conspire to keep you out.

But gold is mighty. You finally get an option on the very site you desire and the very site where, of all others, you are not wanted. The neighbors take measures to oppose you at every step. They try to influence against you the man who proposes to sell you his place. But gold is more persuasive than talk, and you strike the bargain.

They get the best lawyers in town to see if they cannot block the deal, but it goes through. Then they employ the shrewdest real estate lawyers to look up the titles to the property and see if there is not some clause or flaw that would upset the deal. They would like nothing better than to throw some uncertainty into the transaction and thus alter it or invalidate it. But after the most careful scrutiny, with all the documents at their disposal and with the greatest incentives to discover a flaw, they can discover nothing that would invalidate the transaction.

In a thousand ways they endeavor to ostracize and get rid of their undesirable neighbor. They go to great expense and do everything in their power to dislodge him. But he becomes better and better established. After exhausting every means in their power, they again realize that the one sure way of

getting him out is to pick a flaw in the genuineness of his title to the property. If they can destroy or impair his credentials to the place, they can make short work of him.

So again with deliberation and malice, they seek some flaw in his credentials. But they can find no item which cannot bear the light of investigation. They drop the matter, but oppose him with all their might and in every conceivable way. Finally, after a few generations, his family is in as good or better standing than those who in the beginning were too good for him.

At length this particular family becomes the leader of the exclusive social set. Some envious ones, who resent the leadership of this family, plan to discredit it. Being unable to hurt it in any way, on account of its being so well established, the opposition goes back to the beginning of the family and denies that it has any right at all to its present status, as it secured its place originally by fraud.

And to make good their accusations, they bring an array of learned experts to testify that such a man as the founder of the family, and such a family itself, never could have got a rightful foothold in an exclusive neighborhood. "It is too late in the day for such nonsense," would be the general remark. It would be evident to all that it was harder to get established in such a place than it was to stay there. It would be evident that in such a neighborhood the

society of the day took good care not to overlook a ready means of stopping the intruder.

Now, after Christianity has been in possession for many centuries, it is too late to question its one greatest credential, the Gospel truth. The time to do that was at the start. It was not done then because it could not be done. And if it could not be done then, it is absurd to think it can be done now.

The converted Jews and the Christianized pagans had more reasons to question the Gospel truths than the rationalists of today. To them it was a new thing, an absolutely strange thing, a revolutionary thing. To the moderns it is none of these. The rationalists oppose Christianity from the ranks of a society habituated to the maxims, the culture and the morality of Christianity. Their opposition can be nothing compared to that of the early opponents. That those right on the ground failed to use a weapon which meant victory is a sufficient argument against the modern pagans who try to employ that weapon.

A lawyer or a theologian will recognize this argument as that of prescription. But this treatise does not aim at using learned arguments, but only common sense. After all, that is the very best argument. It is the one that appeals to ordinary people, and, in the long run, the ordinary people cannot be deceived in a matter which does not flatter their pride or passions.

Whenever the multitude has been misled, it has

been by appealing to some motive which led them to hope for wealth or pleasure. But apart from such inducements, the people judge rightly. The common sense of mankind, when not tampered with, may be trusted.

Every century some new and learned theory is set up, with fine arguments from learned sources, and a following is obtained among the intellectuals. The common people go on as usual, and, as usual, they see the obsequies of the new learned theory.

It was different with Christ. He did not start by talking. He first did things, things which halted the attention of the common people. When He had shown them that He was a power, a power more than anything on this earth, He began to teach. And that is why the whole multitude of the people followed Him.

But the learned Scribes and Pharisees, with their subtle arguments, did not listen to Him nor learn from Him. Instead, they set themselves to conspire against Him. And in order to let evil work its worst against the Truth, He let them have their way, and thus showed by His passion and death that He was indeed God. The Roman soldier was just a common man, but after the Crucifixion he went down from Calvary repeating: "Indeed, that was the Son of God." [5] The common soldier saw what the learned leaders did not see. And it is so today.

[5] Mark, 13. 39.

So I have presented as the first proof for the truth of the Gospel record a simple statement of fact, which though so simple, I regard just as convincing as the more philosophical and critical demonstrations which are to follow. For I hold always that the truth is open and plain. It needs not to be sought for with a lantern. It shows in the daylight of common sense.

If you go over history, you will find that it is not the learned argumentations that have effected big things, but the simple and open demonstrations which required no artificial elucidation. So the fact that in the early centuries the Gospels were never questioned by Jew, pagan or heretic, is a better witness to their truth than any other that can be brought forth.

To give an example of the regard in which the Gospels were held, as a historic document, I may mention the fact that, when the heretic Marcion, born A. D. 110, wished to oppose Christianity, he did not dare to deny the truth of the Gospel record, but rather produced a mutilated copy which favored his heresy. The fraud was detected immediately. This shows two things, the reverence in which the Gospels were held, and the impossibility of altering them.

However, as there are many who in this age accept only scientific demonstrations, I shall now proceed to prove scientifically three things which will establish

the genuineness of the Gospels: first, that they were written shortly after the events recorded; second, that they were not altered in any essential respect; and third, that they narrate the truth. These three points constitute a historic document.

And first, that they were written in the first century, that is, at the time when the things recorded happened or were fresh in mind. Rather, we shall prove more than that, for in the course of the demonstration it will be shown that the Gospels were written by eye witnesses of the events, or by those to whom eye witnesses dictated them.

For the Gospels were written by four authors called Evangelists. They were called Evangelists because that is the Greek word to describe the announcers of these sacred things. There were four writers and each records what he saw, or what was dictated to him by those who saw the occurrences. Two of the Gospels were written by Apostles, St. Matthew and St. John. The other two were the work of companions of the Apostles, St. Mark and St. Luke.

The authors, therefore, were men living at the very time the things which they narrate occurred. The most advanced and searching criticism now admits all this. Critics who started out to upset the authorship of the Gospels have ended by acknowledging the truth of the Apostolic authorship.

And now to prove that the Gospels were written in Apostolic times, that is, in the age when the events recorded took place.

The Apostle St. John lived right up to the second century. His Gospel, it is claimed, was written only a few years before his death. The other Gospels, those by Matthew, Mark and Luke, it is claimed, were written previously. We must prove this claim. And we shall do it by summoning witnesses who lived in the Apostolic age. They will be writers acknowledged by all critics as reliable and capable witnesses. If we can certify that the Gospels were in use shortly after the death of the last Apostle, it is evident that they are a contemporaneous record, and that is the thing we have to establish in the first place.

We are not now concerned about what is in the Gospels, or if any change ever occurred in them. These points will come up right after this first point is settled. Our aim now is to show that the four gospels were accepted authoritatively shortly after the first century. If we can bring creditable witnesses who lived as close to the Evangelists as we are to Dickens, Thackeray or Scott, we can rely on them absolutely. And we can produce such witnesses. They will testify to the existence of the Gospels in their day, and to their apostolic authorship.

The first witness we call is Justin, who was born a pagan about the year A. D. 100, the end of the first

century. At thirty years of age he was converted to Christianity. Twenty years later, that is, 150 A. D., he addressed a document to the Roman Emperor, setting forth a plain statement of Christianity. He declared that in standing forth as the champion of Christianity, he knew he must expect persecution and death, but he boldly proclaimed the religion of Jesus Christ. He was arrested and beheaded in the year 165.

In his celebrated address to the Emperor, which he calls his Apology, Justin says: "The Apostles in their memoirs that are called Gospels." [6] Again, in his Dialogues, he states that these Gospels have authority because they are considered as Scripture.[7] He also affirms that the Church in her services reads these Gospels with the same regard as the writings of the Prophets.[8] Referring to the Evangelists, he says they were Apostles or companions of the Apostles.[9] This accords with the accepted belief in regard to the Gospels, Matthew and John being Apostles and Mark and Luke companions of the Apostles.

Here, then, we have the testimony of a man who was born before the last of the Evangelists died. He was not born in Christianity but embraced it from paganism. He spoke publicly in an address to the Emperor. He was a scholar and a philosopher. He gave his life for his testimony. His statements are

[6] I Apol. 65. 3.
[7] Dial. 49. circ. Matt. 17.
[8] I Apol. 67. 3.
[9] Dial. 103.

known to be genuine history. There is not in all history a more creditable witness. He mentions the Gospels as being publicly read in the churches in his day. He refers to them as well known documents only a few years after the Apostles had passed away.

Our next witness is Clement of Alexandria, born at the end of the first century. In a dispute with a heretic who misquoted the Gospels, he said: "This passage is not found in the four Gospels we have received." [10] Irenæus, our third witness, born about 130 A.D., makes mention of the same four Gospels.[11] Tertullian, the great and learned Tertullian, born near the end of the second century, frequently gives the names of the four Evangelists.[12]

Clement, Irenæus and Tertullian make a trinity of witnesses that the most critical jurors would have to credit. What adds weight to their testimony is the fact that they lived in parts far separated from one another, Clement in Egypt, Tertullian in Carthage and Irenæus in Lyons.

I could dwell on the fragment of Muratori, which dates from about A. D. 170, and the testimony of Tatian, born 120 A. D., but the evidence already adduced is more than sufficient for a candid mind, and if the mind is not candid, no amount or quality of evidence will suffice.

I rest the case as regards the first point, therefore,

[10] Migne, P. G. 8. 1193.
[11] Migne, P. G. 7. 884.
[12] Migne, P. L. 2. 363.

on the evidence of men of unquestionable integrity and intelligence, who lived as close to the Gospel authors as we do to Dickens, Thackeray and Scott. It is demonstrated, therefore, that the Gospels were written in the first century, that is, in the century in which the Evangelists lived.

We now take up the second point: Were the Gospels changed in any essential respect? I hope to prove conclusively that they were not.

My line of argument will be this: It would be impossible nowadays for anyone to make a change, say, in Dickens's "Oliver Twist," of Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" or Scott's "Ivanhoe," without discovery, protest and condemnation. During the lives of these authors, they themselves would notice any attempt to alter their works. In the short period since their death, the general readers would quickly advert to and brand any mutilation of these classics. That is certain. Of course, here and there, there might occur a printer's mistake which people would let pass, or, if in some unessential detail there was an inaccuracy, it might escape observation or criticism. But these books could suffer no essential alteration without the reading public's indignation and condemnation.

Now, if in works of mere fiction the reading public would act as custodians of the integrity of a work, how much more would it be the case when the book in question was one that meant life and death to

those concerned. We have demonstrated that the Gospels were written by the Evangelists, who lived in the first century. These Gospels were the documentary evidence of Christianity. They were more to the early Christians than the Constitution of the United States is to us.

How carefully is that document safeguarded. If the slightest change in it were attempted, would it not immediately start an uproar? It would simply be impossible to tamper with that constitutional document. The Constitution of Christianity was more inviolable.

We know from well authenticated history how the change of one word in the creed of the Church brought on a tumult throughout the Roman Empire. A little particle, *que,* attached to *filio,* and which some heretics wished to have dropped, caused a split among the faithful which almost tore asunder the Christian peoples. If in a matter of the creed, which was transmitted from the Apostles by tradition, no alteration was possible, how much more was it impossible to effect a change in the sacred writings of those same Apostles.

We can form no idea of the veneration of these credentials of Christianity among the followers of the religion of Christ. To even think of making any alteration in these writings was regarded as sacrilegious. How then could these documents be altered? They were read in all the churches through-

out the Christian world. They were the same everywhere. Even if in some particular place a priest or bishop or layman should attempt to make an alteration, it would be discovered and labelled at once by its disagreement with the Gospels everywhere else.

Just imagine the shock you would get if, in church on a Sunday, you should hear read from the pulpit something different from the Gospel as you know it. Suppose the pastor took up the Gospels and began thus: "The Holy Gospel according to St. Bartholomew." No matter how inattentive or drowsy the congregation might be, it would sit right up, amazed. And, unless an explanation were given, the pastor would be reported to the bishop.

Or suppose the pastor read from the Gospels that Christ was born at Jerusalem, or that Jesus raised Judas to life, would not everyone immediately take notice? Well, the early Christians knew the Gospels virtually by heart. If the very slightest change were made, they would take exception. It was simply a matter of impossibility for anyone to take even the slightest liberty with these Scriptures.

No documents in the history of mankind had such significance and importance as the Gospels. That statement cannot be challenged. All history attests it. How then could they be altered? That they have not been altered is the verdict of the best scholars of the world. Even hostile critics have been obliged to hold up their hands and surrender uncon-

ditionally to the integrity of the Gospel narrative.

I conclude this second point with the following extract from one of the most erudite Scripture scholars of modern times: "Although every attainable source has been exhausted; although the scholars of every age have gleaned for their readings; although the Scripture versions of every nation, Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, and Ethiopian, have been ransacked for their renderings; although manuscripts of every age from the sixteenth back to the third century, and of every country, have been again and again visited by industrious swarms to rifle them of their treasures; although having exhausted the stores of the West, critics have traveled like naturalists into distant lands to discover new specimens, have visited the recesses of Mount Athos, or the unexplored libraries of the Egyptian and Syrian deserts,— yet nothing has been discovered, no, not one single various reading, which can throw doubt upon any Gospel passage before considered certain or decisive in favor of any important doctrine." [13]

But all this is of no account if what the Gospels tell us is not true. It is to no purpose to know that the Gospels were written in the first century by the Apostles, and that what they wrote has come down to us essentially unchanged, if the things they narrate are not true. Having demonstrated the first two points of our thesis, I now proceed with the third and

[13] Wiseman, "Science and Revelation," 1. 10.

the most important. I invite the keenest scrutiny of this demonstration, and I ask you, no matter what your belief, to look at it, as far as you can, unprejudiced.

If the matter stands as well substantiated as anything you have ever demanded in other matters, I ask you to accept the conclusion, regardless of your sentiments. If the light of investigation shows that the Gospels are as true as the truest thing you know of, you will not be acting reasonably unless you acknowledge it. And if you do not wish to act reasonably in this vital matter, you surely will have no cause to complain, when it is too late. I should not be so outspoken and positive in these statements unless I felt certain of my ground.

It is not with presumption that I present the following demonstration, but with the assurance which comes from evidence so great and so abundant that no other volume in the world can claim as much.

As this third point constitutes a distinct and unique testimony to the credentials of Christianity, I make it the subject of the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER V

THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL FACTS

WE have shown in the preceding chapter that the writers of the Gospels were contemporaries of the events, that is, they were actual witnesses of what they record, or else were associated with the witnesses. St. John and St. Matthew actually beheld what they narrated. St. Luke and St. Mark were the secretaries of the Apostles Paul and Peter.

Also we have shown that no change was made or could possibly be made in the Gospels once they were published. These two points being settled, it now remains to demonstrate to a certainty that the facts recorded by the Evangelists, and transmitted unchanged in the Gospels, are true.

I propose to do this in the same way that we now establish the truth of a matter in a court of law. I propose to place the case before a jury of readers, and hope to do so in such a way that it will appear as clear as day that the evidence for the truth of the Gospel facts is stronger and better than what is demanded to substantiate a case before a judge and jury.

If we set about to investigate the truth of a statement in ordinary matters, we consider three things: the person who makes the statement, the fact which he states, and the character of the persons who believed it. If the person who states the fact is unreliable or an interested party, we put little faith in him. If the fact is a very unusual one, we demand the strongest confirmation of it. If the persons who believed it were ignorant or gullible we do not value their testimony much. By looking carefully, therefore, into who the author of a statement was, the nature of that statement, and the character of those who believed it, we can arrive at a true verdict.

Now I propose to be unusually exacting in regard to the evidence on these three points. If at the close you can perceive no flaw in the case as presented, I ask you to render a verdict accordingly. Weigh the matter carefully, scrutinize the evidence as closely as you would a business proposition on which your entire success depended. And above all, I ask you to consider the case judicially and not prejudicially.

And first, as regards the authors of the Gospel statements, what was their character and condition? Were they credible witnesses of what they record? That analytic genius, Pascal, said of these witnesses: "I readily believe the histories of witnesses who sealed their testimony with their death." The writ-

ers of the Gospel account died for their testimony. That shows that they were at least sincere.

Sincerity is a prime requisite in a witness, but it is not enough. A man may be sincere, but at the same time mistaken or imposed upon. Were these authors mistaken or imposed upon? They relate facts and facts only. They draw no conclusions. They simply state what transpired. They merely record what happened.

All the Gospels except St. John's were written close to the time of the occurrences related. If anything they reported was not so, the people would know it and deny it. The Jews who witnessed what the Gospels record never called the truth of the record in question. The things that are recorded occurred in the full light of day. They were in the open. Thousands of onlookers beheld them. If the authors of the Gospels were mistaken or imposed upon, so were all the onlookers.

Such a supposition is impossible. So vast a multitude might be mistaken as regards a special event or a single occurrence. But the Gospel narrative runs over a period of three years and relates facts that occurred in all parts of Judea and Galilee, and in the presence of multitudes numbering thousands. Were all these vast assemblages mistaken or imposed upon during that long period and in such various places? To suppose that all these people were victims of fraud or hallucination is a greater demand

on our common sense than anything related in the Gospels.

The authors then were sincere, and they were not mistaken or imposed upon. Is there anything more you would demand in a witness? But we shall add more because we want to be very exacting with our witnesses.

Their testimony for the most part goes directly against their own interests. They narrate how their Master and Leader was set at naught. They describe Him as the victim of the scorn and cruelty of His own people. They show Him spat upon, scourged, paraded as a fool, mock-crowned, and finally tortured to death on the Cross. They tell how He was abandoned even by themselves. They show Him weak and very human in the Garden of Gethsemani, fatigued and disappointed at Jacob's Well, and finally weeping at the grave of Lazarus.

The picture which they paint of their Hero is, notwithstanding these touches, such a portrait, that no human being could draw it unless he were describing a reality. The portrait of Christ as given in the Gospel narrative is so far beyond the highest conception of the human mind that it never could have been given to us unless the writers had before them the very personality they were describing. "To invent a Newton," says Parker, "one would have to be a Newton himself. What man could invent a person like Jesus?"

A few ordinary men without culture or philosophy could not present to the world the most sublime character known to mankind. They simply reported what they heard and saw, and the result is the life of Christ, the most stupendous achievement of the mind of man. The words of J. J. Rousseau will here occur to the reader: "If the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God."

Our witnesses, therefore, are not only sincere, they were not only not mistaken or imposed upon, but they narrate what goes against their own interests, and besides, tell us something which, if it is not so, was a matter of impossibility for them to invent or describe.

All critics are agreed that the character and teaching of Jesus are as different and superior to all others as the sky is above the earth. That character and that teaching were not the invention of four ordinary writers. Each of the Evangelists wrote at different times and places and recorded different events peculiar to his own Gospel. Yet they all give us the same sublime portraiture.

Now if they give us a character that is unlike anything else in the world, why should they not also give us deeds that are altogether unlike the ordinary doings of the world? And they do. You cannot deny the character they present, why should you deny the deeds?

Moreover, they had no motive in describing what was not so. Rather, they had every motive for not recording the events at all. It brought on them the hostility and persecution of the powerful ones of Israel. Unless what the Evangelists tell us is the exact truth, how would they dare tell it to the very rulers whom it would offend and anger.

If it were not the exact truth in every respect, would not the Scribes and Pharisees who were discredited by the narration rise up and proclaim against it? They never did. They could not. All the people knew the facts and that they were as recorded. The Gospel writers indict the rulers of the people, and these powerful ones reply only by threats of punishment! Nothing parallel to it has occurred in the world. Only the truth could make the writers so fearless and the rulers so fearsome.

To sum up, then, in regard to the authors of the Gospel narrative. They stand forth sincere, undeceived, disinterested, and describing events beyond their powers of invention. Every man of them suffered persecution and violent death for his testimony. They presented their narrative to the very persons who could challenge it and were interested in challenging it, but who did not challenge it. They could not, and they knew it.

I ask you if ever in the history of the world there stood forth better witnesses. I ask you if the annals of human tribunals present more acceptable evidence.

Unless then you wish to go against all judicial procedure, you must admit that these writers are to be believed.

Let us now look into the facts which they relate. The facts are extraordinary. That is what we should expect. As Christ was extraordinary, we should expect to find His achievements so. And we do.

To be surprised at the wonderful things done by Christ is not unnatural. Jesus intended that they should excite surprise, and great surprise. That was why He did them. They were His credentials. He came as the greatest Reformer ever known to mankind. He had to have wonderful credentials.

His mission was to change fundamentally the ways of the world. Nothing similar was ever before or since attempted. He had to show that He was entitled to legislate for mankind. He declared he was God. He had to do things which would substantiate that claim. Instead of the miraculous character of His deeds being a difficulty in the case, it would be a bigger difficulty if they did not have that character.

It is a strange world. Christ comes with divine credentials of His divinity and they are rejected. Yet, if He presented anything less than divine credentials, He would be doubly rejected.

Now the fact is that He carried out His divine mission. He established Christianity in the world. It is here today. We can see it before our eyes. How did He do it without divine credentials?

These credentials were the wonderful deeds recorded in the Gospel.

And now to the consideration of them. Again I plead for a judicial hearing of evidence, and not a prejudicial. If an ordinary case requires an unprejudiced jury, much more does this very extraordinary one.

The facts recorded in the Gospels are chiefly miraculous. Suppose that, instead of going into a lot of details, we take some one of these facts and let our case stand or fall by it. In order to be very fair, we shall take one of the most stupendous of the Gospel miracles. If we demonstrate the truth of this miracle to the satisfaction of a reasonable mind, we thereby prove the miraculous character of the Gospel contents.

The fact we shall consider is the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. This fact concerned a prominent citizen of Jerusalem. It had as witnesses the very bitterest opponents of Christ. That makes a good setting for the case.

Let me introduce the evidence for this fact by an observation of M. de Broglie's in his history of the Church and the Roman Empire: "The events related in the Gospels do not belong, like the records of ancient religions, to a remote, semi-heroic, and semi-barbaric age, nor are they confined to some unknown, deserted land. It was in the bosom of advanced civilization, in the principal city of a Roman

province, visited by Pompey, and described by Tacitus, that Jesus Christ preached, established His Church, and sacrificed His life. His biography has not come down to us from mouth to mouth in rhapsodies heightened by popular enthusiasm and credulity. Four simple precise narratives, agreeing in their assertions, taken down by ocular or contemporaneous witnesses in a perfectly intelligible language, are the documents upon which the history of Jesus Christ is established."

It is then from this record, the best authenticated record in the world, that we take the following fact.

If it is shown by careful analysis that this fact is as stated, there can be no hesitation in accepting the other miraculous deeds recorded in the Gospels. If this fact is conclusively established, it proves that the miraculous is not only possible, but that it was an actual occurrence. As this is one of the greatest miracles reported in the Gospels, it follows that its confirmation removes all inherent difficulties in regard to the other miraculous deeds described in the sacred volume.

It also puts the divine seal on the mission of Jesus Christ, for this miracle was wrought by Him as a specific challenge to His opponents. Before the fact, He pointed to it as a confirmation by Almighty God of the mission that He came on earth to fulfil. This will appear very clearly in the course of our considerations.

I give here in the very words of the text the narration of the occurrence:

"Now there was a certain man sick named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary and of Martha her sister. (And Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair: whose brother Lazarus was sick.) His sisters therefore sent to him saying: Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And Jesus hearing it, said to them: This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God: that the Son of God may be glorified by it.

"Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he still remained in the same place two days. Then after that, he said to his disciples: Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him: Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone thee: and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him.

"These things he said; and after that he said to them: Lazarus our friend sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. His disciples therefore said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death; and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to

them plainly: Lazarus is dead. And I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe: but let us go to him. Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him.

"Jesus therefore came, and found that he had been four days already in the grave. (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.) And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him: but Mary sat at home.

"Martha therefore said to Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But now also I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: And every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever. Believest thou this? She saith to him: Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ the Son of the living God, who art come into this world.

"And when she had said these things, she went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying: The master is come and calleth for thee. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to him:

for Jesus was not yet come into the town: but he was still in that place where Martha had met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily and went out, followed her, saying: She goeth to the grave to weep there.

"When Mary therefore was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus, therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her, weeping, groaned in the spirit, and troubled himself, and said: Where have you laid him? They say to him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said: Behold how he loved him. But some of them said: Could not he, that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die?

"Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre. Now it was a cave; and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith: Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to him: Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?

"They took therefore the stone away. And Jesus lifting up his eyes said: Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou

hearest me always; but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go.

"Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done. The chief priests therefore, and the Pharisees, gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation.

"But one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest that year, said to them: You know nothing. Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself: but being the high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. And not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God, that were dispersed. From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. . . .

"But the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also: Because many of the Jews, by reason of him

went away, and believed in Jesus. And on the next day, a great multitude that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel. . . .

"The multitude therefore gave testimony, which was with him when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead. For which reason also the people came to meet him, because they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him." [1]

So far the record. Is it a true statement of a fact? Let us see. First of all it was recorded by contemporaries. That we have proved in the preceding chapter. Secondly, there was no alteration in the record. That also we have established previously.

Now was it possible for men of the day, writing for men of the day, to report a public event of that magnitude otherwise than the facts justified? If the fact was not as recorded, would the large body of influential opponents of Jesus let it pass unrefuted? They not only did not refute it, but they made no attempt to do so.

[1] John, cc. 11 and 12.

Moreover, they openly acknowledged it and its effect on the people. It threw them into consternation. It drove them to despair. It had the very effect on them that it should have had if true. For seeing that they were dead set against Christ and not open to conviction, it drove them to criminal action. They plotted to kill Christ, and to kill Lazarus, the living evidence of Christ's powers and claims.

You may say, why did not the miracle convert them? And I may say, why does it not convert those in the same class today? They, being prejudiced, read their own minds into all that Christ said and did, just as many do today, just as perhaps you are doing. That is why I postulated a judicial and not a prejudicial attitude of mind in this consideration.

But the multitudes were converted by the miracle. They represented the common people and the common sense of the nation. And there is no sense like common sense. You may mislead a crowd by claptrap if you cater to their passions and weaknesses, but you cannot mislead a crowd if you propose what is counter to their wishes and material interests.

Now Christ performed this miracle, as He said Himself in the text given above, that the people might know that He was sent by Almighty God. And His mission ran counter to the material ex-

pectations of the people He was addressing. And they acclaimed Him and His mission, crying out with one multitudinous voice: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Why then did the multitude crucify Him? The multitude did not. The chiefs of the people went in and out among the people, furiously storming and threatening, and finally, by their rabid agitating, infuriated the crowd into demanding what was dictated to it. The Scribes and Pharisees were the vilest agitators that ever incensed a body of unwilling men to do what they did not want to do. And it was because of this that Jesus, when dying on the Cross, said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" He had in mind the multitude.

Now let us take up this miracle and look into it analytically, and see if it does not carry with it every evidence of truth that a reasonable mind can require. Lazarus was a prominent man of Jerusalem, as we learn from the fact that so many of his friends were assembled to mourn his death. Moreover, his prominence is made evident by his wealth, for the Gospel tells us that Mary, his sister, anointed Jesus with right spikenard of great price and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Its value was so great that Judas objected to it, saying: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" As a penny in those days

was equivalent in purchasing power to a dollar among us,[2] we may see that Lazarus was a man of consequence.

Bethany was a suburb of Jerusalem, about a mile and a half out. It was evidently the dwelling place of the upper classes who wished to be away from the turmoil of the town. The subject of this miraculous event was therefore a man sufficiently prominent to draw the attention of the people at large to his case.

He took sick and died. While he was dying, word was sent to Jesus. But He delayed His going to Bethany for several days. When He arrived, He found that Lazarus was dead and buried and that corruption of the body had set in. When He went to the grave and gave orders to take away the stone, Martha said to Him: "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now dead four days." But Jesus replied: "Did I not say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?" The fact of the death of Lazarus was therefore certain.

The presence of the mourners is further evidence. Now these mourners were friends of the opponents of Jesus, as is clear from the fact that they immedi-

[2] To give us an idea of the value of a penny, we have the instance of the feeding of the five thousand men, where Philip says to our Lord that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not suffice. Certainly nowadays we should say that two hundred *dollars* worth of bread would hardly suffice. Also we have the instance of the parable where the wages were a penny a day.

ately went to the chief priests and Scribes and Pharisees and reported his resurrection. Consequently the miracle was performed in the presence of hostile witnesses. Unless it was in every respect the wonderful deed recorded, they would be the first to take exception to it. But instead of criticizing it, they are dumbfounded. Instead of denying it, they hasten to inform their influential friends about it.

And these enemies of Jesus, when they heard it, evidently took every possible measure to ascertain the truth of the matter. It concerned them more than it does modern critics. The Gospel facts never had such a scrutiny from latter day scientific or sceptical minds as it had from the sceptics of Jerusalem.

They were opposed to Jesus because His teaching showed the falsity of theirs. His candor disclosed their hypocrisy. His success meant their downfall. That is why they were enemies to Him. They sought to discredit Him in every possible way, in order to uphold their own position and power.

For if Jesus was right, they were wrong. And to show how wrong they were, we need no reference to them by Jesus, but only the testimony of their own deeds. And one of their deeds was the very thing they planned to do now to offset this miracle of Christ. They planned to commit murder! To destroy evidence! Instead of being convinced by the miracle of Jesus, they became incensed by it, and

determined on the death, not only of Lazarus, but also of Jesus.

We sometimes wonder why these leaders of the Jews rejected Jesus. But being what they were, would we not be more surprised if they did not reject Him? "He who is not with Me is against Me," declared our Lord. These haughty and sinful men would not be with Christ, so they set themselves against Him.

It was the most natural thing in the world for them to do. If they would not be converted, they must necessarily be perverted. And perverted they were, even to the commission of the greatest crime in history. And they have many followers today.

But to take up the miracle. When the witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus reported the fact to the enemies of Jesus, these latter did not show astonishment at it. They drew no conclusion from it. It did not alter their perverse attitude.

The witnesses reported every word and act of Jesus. They told how, before performing the miracle, Christ raised His eyes to heaven and appealed to what He was about to do as the approval of His eternal Father on His mission,— "That they may know that Thou hast sent Me."

He made it a test case of the truthfulness of His claims. He appealed to it before the entire assemblage gathered there as a proof and confirmation that He was the true Son of God, come into this world to

give us eternal life,—"That they may know that Thou hast sent Me."

Then with the same power and authority by which in the beginning God called all things into existence out of nothing, He called the soul of Lazarus from eternity and remanded it back to its bodily habitation, making the corpse that was decaying into a living man who could hear and obey the voice of his Creator, and who came forth from the tomb when the words of the Master fell on his ears: "Lazarus, come forth." He came forth, and Jesus gave to the bereaved sisters their living and loving brother.

All that and more the witnesses told the fanatical opponents of Christ. Instead of making them enter into themselves and acknowledge the hand of God in this wondrous deed, they only became more hardened and more determined against Jesus.

Do not say, gentle and broad-minded reader, that the poor men were not to blame. We can excuse a great deal, but when men deliberately plot a twofold murder, we cannot, no matter how liberal and generous we wish to be, acquit them of downright malicious wickedness. They furnish the best proof themselves of their own depravity. They more than confirm by their own actions the condemnation pronounced against them by Jesus Christ Himself, the gentlest person that ever lived. Having received unquestionable evidence of the resurrection of Lazarus, they closed their eyes to it. They did not want evi-

dence, they wanted His destruction. They have many disciples nowadays.

See their conduct on realizing this newest proof of Christ's power and claims: "The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him. . . . From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. . . . The chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also, because many of the Jews, by reason of him, went away, and believed in Jesus."

All this is taken verbatim from the record as given in the text above. Peruse it again, and see for yourself the confirmation of all that I have advanced. Never was there clearer evidence for a fact, never was there bolder defiance of all that the fact signified. Mark how these men did not question the miracle. They admitted it. That is more than some opponents of Christianity do today. And yet these enemies of our Lord had infinitely more reason for not admitting the miracle than modern sceptics.

But with all their animus against Christ and all their means of discrediting His miracles, they were not able to do so. They even had recourse to blasphemy to explain what they could not deny, and dared to assert that His deeds were the result of Satanic influence. That shows how hard they were driven.

But while malice and prejudice were thus driving

the chief priests and Scribes to desperate measures, common sense, the common sense of the great body of the common people, was impelling the multitude to recognize Christ as the Messiah.

Accordingly, when the populace heard that Jesus was on His way from Bethany to Jerusalem, they went out in a body to meet Him and escort Him. They had such reverence for Him that they took the very garments from their backs and laid them along the road, that not even the feet of the animal that carried Him might be soiled. In the whole history of the world, there is no demonstration of reverence and honor comparable to that.

And as He went along, the people cut down branches from the palm trees and waved them in triumph before the King of Isræl, singing meanwhile: "Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." If the miracle was not just as recorded, could it have produced that effect? And if that demonstration were not just as it is recorded, would the writers have dared to report it?

Remember the Evangelists were contemporaries. The Gospels were heard and read by the very people who were participators in the events narrated. They had every reason to object to what was narrated, as, for the most part, it recorded their own ingratitude and wrongdoing. But so true was it all that it never occurred to them to challenge its veracity.

Now if these persons who were on the ground, and

saw with their own eyes all that transpired, accepted this fact of the resurrection of Lazarus, what right have we, two thousand years removed from the occurrence, to call it into question?

This Jewish multitude constituted the body of those who believed this fact. They demonstrate the third factor which we consider in weighing evidence, namely, the character of those who believed it. This Jewish multitude was an intelligent body of people, — it was not interested in believing.

Rather, they and those who later accepted the Gospel narrative were antagonistic to Christ's claims. But the clear evidence of facts convinced and converted them. No fact of history had as witnesses men harder to convince than had the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus.

In any court of law, if a case were presented and had half the evidence for it that this fact has, could there be any question about the verdict? No honest jury would hesitate a moment. Nothing but the rankest prejudice could prevent a unanimous verdict in favor of the case.

I wish to lay special stress on the marvelous demonstration accorded to Jesus by the people generally shortly after the resurrection of Lazarus. Either that demonstration took place or it did not. If it took place, it was the most unqualified confirmation of the truth of the miracle. No greater proof could be conceived or required. If that demonstra-

tion did not take place, it is impossible to understand how the record could give it, since it would have met with the denial and condemnation of the very people who were concerned in it.

Any denial of the Gospel record postulates such general stultification that no man of reasonable mind can entertain it for a moment. No history of the world bears better internal and external evidence of its truthfulness than does the Gospel record. I invite you to consider any established fact of history and see if you can find it better substantiated than this fact I have dwelt upon from the Gospels, the resurrection of Lazarus.

As that fact is demonstrated true, so every fact of the Gospels may be demonstrated. By selecting a typical miraculous deed and showing its truth, the miraculous is proved. We considered the nature and character of the writers, the nature and character of the fact, and the nature and character of those who believed it. As a result, we saw that the evidence is as strong as a reasonable mind may demand.

The truth of the miraculous is made certain. The evidence presented satisfies every judicial requirement. The result is, that unless you admit the truth of this record, you must reject all documents of the past. You must say farewell to history and distrust all the annals of former days.

To conclude, I quote again from M. de Broglie: "A concert of ancient testimony, a prompt diffusion,

the similarity of the texts spread throughout the entire world, the conformity of the narratives with contemporaneous chronology, constitute characteristics which in their turn entitle the Gospels to rank among the authentic monuments of the past. Criticism can exact no more. We know Jesus Christ through His disciples John and Matthew, and their companions Luke and Mark. Have we any other knowledge of Alexander or Augustus than that furnished us by their companions in arms or their courtiers?

"Because the Gospel facts pertain to faith, and carry with them a certain order of moral consequences, is that any reason for rejecting, in regard to them, all the ordinary rules of human judgment? We ask no other favor for the Gospel than that of being judged by the usual tests applied by science and erudition."

CHAPTER VI

THE RESURRECTION

WE have seen that the Gospels are the most authentic and truthful record of the past possessed by mankind. From this record we are now going to consider a fact which Jesus Christ Himself pointed to as the chief sign of His divine mission. Before the fact occurred, Christ foretold it. It was not a fact governed by the fixed laws of nature, and therefore scientifically foreseeable, but a fact depending on the free and independent actions of a multitude of men, and therefore foreseeable by divine knowledge only.

We moderns often fancy that there were no sceptics in the old days. Some people think that criticism and scrutiny are peculiar to these latter times. But there were men "from Missouri" in the early days just as there are today, and they were just as wary until shown clearly the truth of a matter as our friends from the Middle West.

In the time of Christ the gentlemen "from Missouri" were the Scribes and Pharisees, and they required to be shown, and were very stubborn about it. On one occasion, the Pharisees openly asked Christ

for a sign, as a proof of His claims. He had been giving them signs right along, but they wanted more and greater. They tried to explain away His wonderful deeds, either by saying that it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or else attributing the deeds to Satanic influence. But the deeds themselves they never did or could deny. They were all done in the open before large multitudes.

On another occasion when Jesus plainly declared to them that He was God, they were so incensed that they took up stones to stone Him. When He said to them: "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father, for which of those works do you stone Me?" they answered: "For a good work we stone thee not, but because thou, being a man, makest thyself God." [1]

You see they were not credulous, but critical, even to a hostile degree. You also see that they understood what He meant by His claims that He was really God. Nowadays, sceptics seem to think that Christ did not declare Himself to be truly God. But these ancient sceptics were in a better position than their modern brethren to know what He meant, and they knew He declared Himself to be God, and they accused Him of blasphemy because He made Himself to be the true Son of God.

Christ fully realized the wonderfulness of His claims, so He met their charge fairly and scientifi-

[1] John, 10.

cally: "Do you say that I blaspheme because I said I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not, but if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." [2]

Could modern sceptics take a bolder stand than those who confronted Christ? And could any modern scientific demonstrator meet an issue more satisfactorily than Christ did?

In case there should be any lingering doubt that the persons of Christ's time were as hard to convince as those of today, I give the following report of an occurrence by one who witnessed it. No modern investigator, no sceptic, could be more exacting than those described herein:

"And Jesus passing by, saw a man, who was blind from his birth: And his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

"When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the

[2] John, 10.

clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which is interpreted, Sent. He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing.

"The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat, and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not.

"They bring him that had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was the sabbath when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again therefore the Pharisees asked him, how he had received his sight. But he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see.

"Some therefore of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God, who keepeth not the sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? And he said: He is a prophet.

"The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received

his sight, and asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself: he is of age, let him speak for himself.

"These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask himself.

"They therefore called the man again that had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner. He said therefore to them: If he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said then to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes?

"He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard: why would you hear it again? will you also become his disciples? They reviled him therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is.

"The man answered, and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from

whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered, and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him; and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him." [3]

The above is from an eye witness. It shows not only the malicious bad faith of the Jewish leaders, and their keen scrutiny of everything Christ did, but also that they did not and could not deny His miracles.

I say all this by way of introduction, because there are some people nowadays, superficially educated, who imagine that things could pass in those days which would never be allowed to pass now. They forget that the Gospel facts occurred in the era of Cæsar, Augustus, Tacitus and Pliny. It was the age of ripe scholarship and keen criticism. It was the

[3] John, 9.

period when courts and sages and historians flourished.

The Gospel facts do not belong at all to a hazy past wherein fact and fancy blend. It is very necessary to keep this in mind in the investigation of the Resurrection. I ask you, fair minded reader, to consider all the facts of the Resurrection as transpiring before a body of citizens as keenly alive to things and their significance as any body of people in our country today.

We know how the people were agitated over the Peace terms and the League of Nations recently. We saw how they examined the matter very minutely and in all its bearings. Well, the Resurrection was a bigger affair than the League of Nations, and its consequences were infinitely greater to the people of that day and of all days. Consequently, we may be sure that they let nothing pass in regard to that great event except what was justified by the strongest evidence.

If we are to enter into the right attitude of mind in this consideration, we must realize that the Resurrection was a public matter, that it stirred a whole people, that these people were very keen, as shrewd as any on earth then or now, and that they had every reason in the world for opposing the Resurrection, seeing that it would prove their own undoing and their greatest condemnation.

Yet despite all this, the first day on which the

Apostle Peter proclaimed the Resurrection, in the very city where it occurred, three thousand people believed in it, and were baptized as followers of the Risen Christ, and gave their lives for their belief, for they were immediately set down for persecution and death.[4] Those three thousand men were not ignorant nor were they fools.

The day after, five thousand more were added. And soon, doubtless, all the people would have believed, had not the leaders used the same vile means to prevent the Resurrection from being proclaimed that they had employed in bringing about the Crucifixion. These were the fanatical leaders of the people whom Jesus, the gentle Jesus, had branded as a brood of vipers. They had tried to kill Lazarus and had succeeded in killing Christ, and they now saw that His Resurrection would be their death-knell. So they determined to prevent its proclamation.

Why did they not yield to its convincing proof? They had committed themselves to an evil course, and, like most who do that, they pursued it to the end. They are the most awful warning in all history against acting in bad faith, for their end was destruction.

But the fact remains that on the first day of the proclamation of the Resurrection, three thousand joined the Church of the Crucified. To bring over

[4] Acts, 2.

such a multitude to the worship of One whom a short while before they had marched as a fool through the streets of their city and had led outside it to execution as a criminal, is every bit as big a miracle as the Resurrection itself. Without the Resurrection, such a change in so many minds is incomprehensible.

Now remember that all these data are taken from the most reliable documents of history. I am not stating myths or fables. The Roman tribunals and the Roman records witnessed to these events which occurred under a Roman Governor. All this is but a prelude to the matter before us. It is given to put you at the start in the right frame of mind to consider the sign which Jesus Christ Himself gave as the chief credential of His divine mission.

And the wonderful thing about this sign is that it was a *prophecy fulfilled,* as well as a most stupendous supernatural fact in itself. It therefore proves the divine mission of Christ in a twofold way, by *prophecy* and by *miracle.*

That Jesus foretold His Resurrection we have from His very enemies. That is the best possible evidence, for we cannot suspect it. They went to the Roman governor, after the Roman soldiers had carried out the sentence of the Roman tribunal by putting Jesus to death, and asked this Roman executive to give them a guard to watch the tomb of the Crucified. For, said they, this impostor declared that He would rise from the grave.

I emphasize the character of the Roman officials and soldiers in this matter because I want to show that we have the same reason for putting reliance on what is recorded as we have for any event that occurred about the same time at Rome. We have no better testimony for believing the assassination of Cæsar than we have for the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In fact, the testimony is not as weighty in Cæsar's case, but we accept it because it costs us nothing. In Christ's case it may cost us very much, no less, in fact, than the complete reform of our lives, for Jesus said: "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that have done good things shall come forth unto resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment." [5] Belief in Christ's resurrection has a direct effect on our lives.

It is because the Resurrection is not only the credential of Christ's divinity, but also the pledge of our own, that those who fear the judgment of the life hereafter try to shut their eyes to it. For that reason, having eyes they see not, as our Lord said of the Pharisees. But to a man who is willing to investigate the Resurrection as he would the assassination of Cæsar, I am sure it will stand out not only as well established, but even better.

Jesus therefore foretold His Resurrection, and the

[5] John, 5. 28.

Jews knew it. His prophecy was: "They shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and the third day he shall rise again." [6] In this prophecy He foretold exactly what was to happen. No one but God can foresee the free actions of men. It was by divine power, therefore, that He declared so exactly all that actually took place afterwards.

In the above prophecy, He not only declares that He will rise again after crucifixion, but He states moreover all the chief events leading up to the Resurrection. "He shall be delivered to the Gentiles." That happened. The Gentiles were the Romans, as everyone knows. By the Roman soldiers also He was mocked, scourged and crucified,— an exact fulfilment of the prophecy. "And the third day he shall rise again." To prevent that, the Jewish leaders went to the Roman governor Pilate, a historic Roman governor, Pontius Pilate,[7] and asked for a guard to watch the grave. Pilate first required a certificate of Christ's death, and then bade them guard His grave as they would.

As a setting, therefore, for the Resurrection, we have the following incontrovertible facts: the *record* is the most authentic document of history; Christ *foretold* His Resurrection; the Jews *knew* He foretold it; the opponents of Christ were as *sceptical* as

[6] Matt. 20. 19.

[7] Tacitus, Annals, Bk. 15, ch. 44.

any today; the *death* of Christ was certified to the Roman governor; the *Resurrection* was proclaimed in the very city where it occurred and to the very people who were instrumental in Christ's death; the *first proclamation* converted to belief in Christ three thousand of those who had rejected and crucified Him; the *whole people* were in the way to conversion, but the Jewish leaders prevented it.

No case in law, no fact of history, is so well established as the Resurrection. I now proceed to take up the great event in detail and show conclusively that we must either accept the Resurrection, or else put no faith in any event of the past, and thus destroy history altogether.

Christ realized better than His hearers or ourselves the tremendous claims He was making. Hence He furnished a proof which would justify those claims. Necessarily it had to be a most wonderful demonstration. And so it was. We must therefore be prepared for it. If it were anything less, we might reject it as being insufficient. Christ therefore made it the most stupendous thing conceivable.

His teaching opposed the evil inclinations of man's heart and the pride of man's intellect. To win the submission of man's heart and mind to His exalted teaching of morality and to the sublime and incomprehensible truths of the mysteries which He revealed, required a credential so divine that there

could be no question about the divinity of His mission.

The Gospel narrative of the Resurrection is as follows:

"And on the first day of the week very early in the morning they came to the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared: and they found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre. And going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

"And it came to pass, as they were astonished in their mind at this, behold two men stood by them in shining apparel. And as they were afraid and bowed down their countenance towards the ground, they said unto them: Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spoke unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

"And they remembered his words. And going back from the sepulchre they told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest. . . .

"Now whilst they were speaking these things, Jesus stood in the midst of them, and saith to them: Peace be to you: it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frighted, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have.

"And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and feet. But while they yet believed not and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here any thing to eat? And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honey-comb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains he gave to them.

"And he said to them: These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; and he said to them: Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead on the third day: and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay you in the city, till you be endued with power from on high.

"And he led them out as far as Bethania: and lifting up his hands he blessed them. And it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, he departed from them, and was carried up to heaven. And they

adoring went back into Jerusalem with great joy." [8]

That was the occurrence which wrought the greatest change ever known in the world. It was the event which made the world Christian. Let us take it up and examine it judicially.

Nobody saw Christ rise from the dead, but hundreds saw Him alive after He was dead and buried. If you say it would be a stronger proof if people had actually seen Him rise from the tomb, I reply that hundreds actually saw Him ascend into heaven after He had shown Himself on numerous occasions and at various places for forty days.

The question is not how He rose, or if someone saw Him rise, but did He rise? That He did we have the testimony of eye witnesses who saw Him alive and spoke to Him and touched Him with their very hands. And these were not credulous or willing witnesses. They had to be shown.

Jesus, to show them that it was not their imagination, and also that they were not beholding a phantom, actually partook of their food and made them touch His very body and feel His wounds. For six weeks He abode with them and was seen by thousands. During this time He enlightened His Apostles on the matters of faith, and gave them orders to preach it to the world.

All very wonderful, you say, almost past belief. Yes, indeed, very wonderful, but not a bit more so

[8] Luke, 24.

than what happened in consequence of it. For, as a consequence of the Resurrection, the Apostles, who were for the most part unlettered and ignorant men, went forth among Jews and Gentiles, the greatest preachers and the most successful missioners in the annals of mankind.

Not only that, but, from being cowardly men, they stood forth champions of the Resurrection, more fearless and constant than any cause known to man has produced. Moreover, with nothing to aid them but with everything to hinder them, they accomplished by the Resurrection the greatest achievement in all history.

We must not look at the Resurrection merely by itself, although even thus it stands as firmly as any fact recorded in history, but to see it aright we must consider it in its relation to the things which followed, which were in perfect harmony with it, which fully corroborated it, and which without the Resurrection are more incomprehensible than the Resurrection itself.

We know that before the Resurrection the Apostles were just ordinary men of the peasant type. This appears from the testimony of the judges at the first trial of the Apostles: "Now seeing the constancy of Peter and John, understanding that they were illiterate and ignorant men, they wondered."[9] They were so cowardly that they all ran away when

[9] Acts, 4.

Jesus was sentenced to death. Yet after His death, they courted imprisonment, stripes and death. What caused that transformation? The Resurrection.

They who before were in hiding for fear of the Jews, now went boldly among them and proclaimed themselves the followers of Christ. Even before their judges, they stood up bravely and calmly and delivered their message. They were sentenced to be scourged for preaching the Resurrection, but they rejoiced to receive stripes for Christ, and went on preaching the Resurrection.

They were not fanatics. Read the Acts of the Apostles through and see if you can find anywhere in history more calm, better tempered, or more evenly balanced characters. But they were crusaders. They were the first crusaders, and never men gave their all as they did for the Cross of Christ and for Him who died on it.

Read this incident, taken from Acts, chapter 5:

"Then went the officer with the ministers and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying: Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in this name: and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine: and you have a mind to bring the blood of this man upon us.

"But Peter and the Apostles, answering said: We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers has raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be prince and saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins; and we are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to all that obey him.

"When they had heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they thought to put them to death. But one of the council rising up, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law respected by all the people, commanded the man to be put forth a little while; and he said to them: Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do, as touching these men.

"For before these days rose up Theodas, affirming himself to be some body, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain: and all that believed him, were scattered, and brought to nothing. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolling, and drew away the people after him, he also perished: and all, even as many as consented to him, were dispersed.

"And now therefore I say to you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it, lest perhaps you

be found even to fight against God. And they consented to him.

"And calling in the Apostles, after they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus, and they dismissed them. And they indeed went from the presence of the council rejoicing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. And every day they ceased not, in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus."

Could men not absolutely sure of their mission act in that manner? What had they to gain? Nothing except persecution, punishment, exile, death. What had they to lose? Everything, except the truth. Now men do not adhere even to a good cause unless they have strong incentives. Why then should men adhere to this condemned cause?

The Jewish authorities condemned it. The Roman government condemned it. The passions of men condemned it. The pride of men condemned it. The convenience of men condemned it. The customs and traditions of men condemned it. Why should a few illiterate and ignorant men advocate it, be zealous for it, suffer for it, die for it? Because it was true. The Resurrection was a fact.

And it was because the Resurrection was true that those few illiterates triumphed over the sages of

Greece and Rome. It was because it was true that those few weaklings conquered the Roman Empire and made the world Christian.

Now tell me, in all fairness, which is more incomprehensible, the Resurrection, or the result of the Resurrection? Naturally we can comprehend neither, but supernaturally we comprehend both easily.

If Christ is God, the Resurrection is the most natural thing in the world. If not, it is the most incomprehensible and impossible. If the Resurrection is true, the result of the Resurrection is the most natural thing in the world. If not, it is the most unbelievable and impossible. But we are dealing with facts, stubborn things. The fact is, we have the result of the Resurrection. We cannot evade that. Neither can we evade the cause of that result. Therefore, the fact of the Resurrection stands.

But have we really got that fact, the result of the Resurrection? Have we got indisputable evidence that in consequence of the Resurrection the religion of Christ rapidly conquered the pagan world? My dear reader, we have the very best evidence ever presented for a fact. I shall give you presently such witnesses to this Result, that no matter what your animus, you cannot reject them.

For fear you may distrust Christian testimony, I shall begin by calling to the witness stand the most

approved Roman writers, acknowledged everywhere as the highest type of pagan historians. These writers are classics in the world of literature, and not being Christians, their evidence cannot be suspected of favoring the Christian cause. First we shall prove the rapid establishment of Christianity, and then that it was due mainly to the Resurrection.

Our first witness is Tacitus. In the Annals, Book 15, Chapter 44, he states that Christian religion originated in Judea while Pontius Pilate was Procurator there, under the Emperor Tiberius; that Christ suffered under the same Pilate; that, spite of this condemnation by Roman authority, the religion of Christ had spread to such an extent that in Rome itself it numbered a vast multitude.

They were so numerous in the time of Nero, 64 A.D., that Tacitus says explicitly that "this religion overran not Judea alone, the country of its birth, but Rome itself." By the testimony, therefore, of this non-Christian, we see what was the Result of the Resurrection even in far off pagan Rome.

Pliny was the Roman governor of the province of Bithynia. In his letter to the Emperor Trajan, a few years after the death of the last Apostle, he states that there is a numerous and well organized body of Christians in that remote province; that the religion flourished not only in the cities, but also in the villages and the open country; that the pagan

temples were in consequence deserted and the sacrifices discontinued.[10]

So much for non-Christian evidence. When we come to Christian documents whose authenticity is certain, we are simply overwhelmed with testimony to the rapid extension of the religion of Christ.

Justin, who wrote an Apology to the Roman Emperor in behalf of the persecuted Christians, states in his book of Dialogues that the name of Jesus was known throughout the world.[11] Justin himself was martyred for the religion he defended so nobly by his writings. He was born 100 A.D., when the last Apostle was still living. He was a pagan until his thirtieth year, which makes his testimony all the more remarkable.

It may not be out of place to give here his own reason for his conversion, as it throws a light on the effect of the Resurrection:

"When I was a disciple of Plato, hearing the accusations made against the Christians, and seeing them intrepid in the face of death and of all that men fear, I said to myself that it was impossible that they should be living in evil and in the love of pleasure." [12]

After his conversion, he said: "I, too, expect to be persecuted and to be crucified." [13] In the year

[10] Plin. Ep. Lib. X, 97.
[11] Dial. c. Tryph. n. 117.
[12] II Apol. 18. 1.
[13] II Apol. 3.

165 he was scourged and beheaded.[14] We can believe men of that type.

Tertullian, who was born about A.D. 160, a pagan until middle age, addressing the Roman Emperor, says: "We are but of yesterday, and we fill all that is yours; your cities, your islands, your military posts; your boroughs, your council-chambers and your camps; your tribes, your corporations; the palace, the senate, the forum: your temples alone do we leave to you."[15] In his book against the Jews, he says that inhabitants of Africa, Spain and Gaul and Brittany, Sarmatia, Dacia, Germania and Scythia, had embraced Christianity.[16] This was written about the year 200.

Is it any wonder that such a result drew from Renan himself the following remark: "In a hundred and fifty years the prophecy of Jesus was accomplished. The grain of mustard seed which had become a tree began to cover the world."[17] And what was it all? What, but the Result of the Resurrection!

There is the *Result,* therefore, the great *Effect.* It had a *Cause.* Every effect must have a cause. That is logic. Opponents of Christianity have tried to assign every and any cause except the real

[14] Migne, P. G. VI, 1565.
[15] Apolog. c. 37.
[16] Adv. Jud. c. 7.
[17] Brueckhart, Dub. Rev., Oct., 1880.

cause, the Resurrection, but all in vain. The Effect is supernatural and so is the *Cause*. And that supernatural cause was the Resurrection.

In order to clinch the case beyond all rebuttal, we shall now consider one or two points which will leave us absolutely no doubt that the rapid and widespread acceptance of Christianity was due to the divine character stamped on it by the Resurrection.

The following facts should be kept in mind: that the men who preached Christianity were naturally altogether unfitted for so great an undertaking and achievement; that the religion itself was opposed to all the ways and interests of the world, and that even the greatest men could not secure its acceptance unless they were divinely supported; that its acceptance meant the greatest sacrifice to human nature ever recorded in history; and that finally the period of its establishment was such as to be most radically opposed to everything about it.

It is simply impossible to assemble such an array of difficulties against any enterprise of man. If any one of these obstacles confronted a human undertaking, it would fail. All of them combined did not prevent the successful establishment of Christianity. If that is not a Result which shows the truth of the Resurrection, and consequently of Christianity, there is no use reasoning about anything.

When we consider how the great sages of the

world have at times endeavored to introduce among mankind some new way of life, and have failed, with all their learning and prestige and their appeal to the interests and passions of man, we can realize what the triumph of Christianity means, with its poor natural equipment and the tremendous odds against it.

Other religions and cults have got a following by pandering to pride and passion, but Christianity opposed pride and passion. Other religious systems have got a foothold by offering human inducements. Christianity, on the contrary, not only offered no human inducements, but frankly declared the opposite.

Other creeds have thrived in this soil or that, among this nation or that, being sustained by national, racial or martial glory. But Christianity was exiled from its birthplace, Judea, and as a foreigner and stranger and an enemy conquered the proudest and most powerful empire the world has known. Not confined to one nation or race, it spread over the known world, and made out of paganism our Christian civilization.

Now that victory talks. It is impossible not to hear its message. It declares in reason's language that the establishment of the religion of Christ was not a human but a divine achievement. It is God talking to us, as much as His omnipotence speaks to us by the magnitude and order of the universe. The

same divine power that made the world established this unworldly religion in the world.

In order that this may be plainly manifest, I now take up in detail the establishment of this wonderful thing in the world. As it will present a new demonstration of the truth of the Resurrection, I reserve it for the following chapter.

But let me conclude this one by saying that never has any enterprise known to man presented such credentials for acceptance as Christianity. And of these, the principal one is that to which Christ Himself appealed when He was asked for a sign:

"Some of the Scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying: Master, we would see a sign from thee. Who answering, said to them: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign: and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights: so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." [18]

"The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." [19]

Oh, yes, but all this implies miracles, you may say. It does. But why should not He who gave us the ether, by which the scientific miracle of wireless telephony is accomplished, not also give us the Resurrection? He gave us the ether and the other marvels

[18] Matt. 12. 38. [19] Luke, 24. 5.

of creation, which scientists gradually discover, in order to benefit our mortal life. And why should He not give us the Resurrection to benefit our eternal life?

If He must be listened to and obeyed as God, He must also do the things of God. If He tells us His is the way to eternal life, He must show us that it is by some divine manifestation.

A miracle, therefore, is not only proper, but it is demanded by the very nature of the case. The Resurrection was that miracle.

CHAPTER VII

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

IN our last chapter we pointed out the truth of the Resurrection by showing that the rapid and widespread acceptance of Christianity was a consequence of it. As Christ appealed to the Resurrection as His chief credential, and as the establishment of Christianity demonstrated the truth of the Resurrection, His divine mission is certain.

We shall now proceed to show more in detail that the Apostles based their mission solely on the truth of the Resurrection; and that considering the ideas and morality promulgated by Christianity, and the terrible sacrifices and sufferings which its acceptance entailed, it never could have been established except by divine power.

To bring about the worship of one crucified as a malefactor by order of a Roman governor was an impossibility without divine intervention. The worship of the Crucified was established, as we know from Roman documents. The Resurrection was the divine intervention which made that establishment possible.

We shall show in the first place that the Apostles

based their mission solely on the Resurrection. Afterwards, we shall demonstrate that without a miraculous sign like the Resurrection, it was utterly impossible for a religion inculcating the ideas and morals of Christianity, to gain a foothold in the world.

A complete moral and social transformation, such as was effected after the death of Christ, requires an explanation. Every effect postulates a cause.

The Apostles themselves will be our witnesses that they based their mission solely on the Resurrection. We begin with St. Paul. Weigh well his words, as he addresses the people of Corinth:

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast after what manner I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

"For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven: then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once: of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen by James, then by all the Apostles: and last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time.

"For I am the least of the Apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace in me hath not been void, but I have laboured more abundantly than all they: yet not I, but the grace of God with me: for whether I, or they: so we preach, and so you have believed.

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose again from the dead, how do some among you say, that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. *And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain:* yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have given testimony against God, that he hath raised up Christ, whom he hath not raised up, if the dead rise not again.

"For if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. Then they also, that are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruit of them that sleep.*" [1]

St. Paul was an exception to the Apostles generally in this respect, that he was a man of learning.

[1] I Cor. 15.

Not only was he learned, but he was also a genius. There are no loftier conceptions in all literature than those to be found in his writings. He was the strongest opponent of Christianity in the beginning, and its greatest champion eventually.

Now this Apostle, in presenting his case to the Jews and pagans, does not touch upon philosophical or ethical reasons for the creed he advocates, but on the Resurrection only. He makes that the basis of everything. It is the motive for accepting the creed and the reason that the creed is true.

Not like Plato or Socrates does he proceed, but like the Master Himself who spoke with power. Paul points to the Resurrection, and in view of that, sweeps aside every argument and obstacle. He has no other ground to stand on. "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

If any of the preachers of Christianity were qualified to spread the Gospel by human means, it was Paul. Yet we find him insisting exclusively on the one great fact, the Resurrection. When the Jews, who were angered at the number of converts he was making, had him seized and taken before the Roman governor, Felix, on false charges, he rose up in the court of judgment and said to Felix: "Let these men themselves say if they found in me any

iniquity, except it be for this one voice only that I cried, standing among them, concerning the resurrection of the dead." [2]

It is true that once St. Paul had gained converts to Christianity by the Resurrection, he appealed to them in various other ways to confirm them in the faith and its practice. All the other Apostles did likewise. But the basic argument for the faith was the Resurrection.

St. Peter, the head of the Apostles, uses no other argument but that of the Resurrection: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, . . . this same being delivered up, . . . you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain. *Whom God hath raised up. . . . This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses.* . . . Therefore, let all the house of Israel know most certainly, that God hath made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you have crucified. . . . They therefore that received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls." [3]

That was the first sermon preached after the Resurrection. It was in the very city of the Resurrection. Its theme was the Resurrection. The first converts were the fruits of the Resurrection.

A few days later, "Peter and John went up into

[2] Acts, 24. 20. [3] Acts, 2.

the temple, . . . and a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb . . . asked to receive an alms. . . . But Peter said: Silver and gold I have none, but what I have I give thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk, . . . and he leaping up stood and walked . . . and all the people saw him walking and praising God. . . . Peter said to the people: Ye men of Israel, why wonder ye at this, . . . as if by our power we had made this man to walk. . . . The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom you indeed delivered up, . . . *whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.*" [4]

The next day they were seized and brought before the Jewish council. The high priest asked them:

"By what power, or by what name, have you done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said to them: Ye princes of the people, and ancients, hear: Be it known to you all, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, *whom God hath raised from the dead,* even by him this man standeth here before you whole.

"Now seeing the constancy of Peter and John, understanding that they were *illiterate and ignorant* men, they wondered, saying: What shall we do to these men? for indeed *a known miracle* has been done by them, to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[4] Acts, 3.

But that it may be no further spread among the people, let us threaten them that they speak no more in this name.

"And they charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answering, said: "If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard." [5]

On that day five thousand more were added to the believers in the Resurrection. It was the Resurrection that was foremost in their minds in all their preaching and acts.

See how, in choosing a successor to Judas, they had the Resurrection before them. At the first assemblage after the Resurrection, "Peter rising up said: The Scripture must be fulfilled concerning Judas, who was numbered with us, wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out amongst us, beginning from the baptism of John, until the day wherein *he was taken up from us,* one of these must be made a *witness with us of his resurrection.*" [6]

Now, my dear reader, these acts and words are not taken from a book of fables, or myths, nor from the hazy past. The document which records them belongs to the most enlightened period of pre-Christian civilization. It was written in the same era that

[5] Acts, 4. [6] Acts, 1.

Tacitus gave us his history and Cæsar his Commentaries, and its genuineness and truth are better established than the works of either Tacitus or Cæsar.

The ripest scholarship of the world has scrutinized these documents and the verdict of the learned world is that, unless we accept them, we must reject history altogether. I insist on this because there are some superficial minds who are loud and positive in proportion as their knowledge is limited. Such persons " pooh pooh " the sacred records because they report the miraculous. But they fail to see, as any sensible and educated man must, that such a result as the establishment of Christianity without the miraculous fact of the Resurrection is as great a miracle as any recorded in Scripture.

From the words and deeds, therefore, of the very preachers of Christianity, we have demonstrated that they made the Resurrection the basis and the motive of faith in Jesus Christ. On the Resurrection solely they relied for the acceptance of the new creed. The establishment, therefore, of Christianity is the result of the Resurrection.

This will be further evident to any fair and judicial mind from the following considerations:

First, the Apostles would be the biggest fools in history to devote their labors and their lives to preaching the Resurrection if they did not have certain evidence of it. What were they to gain by preaching

the Resurrection? Not riches, not power, not comfort, not fame, not anything that induces men to devote themselves to a cause.

But, on the other hand, they preached the Resurrection even though they were persecuted, exiled, imprisoned, scourged, and finally put to death. It cost them everything that man values, yet they paid the price. It deprived them of everything that man yearns for, yet they gladly endured the deprivation. And why? Because the Resurrection was true. Let us hear them speak.

"We would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our tribulation, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life. But we had within ourselves the answer of death, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead." [7]

"Herod the King stretched forth his hands to afflict some of the Church, and he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword." [8]

"Behold the men whom you put in prison are teaching the people. Then went the officer and having brought them set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying: Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in this name; and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. But Peter and the Apostles answering said: We ought to obey God rather than men.

[7] II Cor. 1. 8. [8] Acts, 12.

The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, and we are witnesses of these things. When they had heard these things, they thought to put them to death. After they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus; and they dismissed them. And they indeed went from the presence of the council, *rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer* reproach for the name of Jesus." [9]

Were they fanatics, men blinded by their own infatuation? Fanatics do not speak with calmness and serenity. Fanatics do not establish an organization that endures throughout the ages, and numbers among its adherents the wisest and best men that have ever lived. Fanatics do not agree one with another, and preach the very same doctrine constantly and in various parts of the world. Fanatics preach themselves, their own ideas, their own vain imaginings.

But these men never preached themselves. Their own personality is ever in the background. How came it that without any human inducement they all started to preach the same theme at the same time and in the same way? Because they were all preaching an objective truth, which was one and the same, the Resurrection. A few men may be fanatics and deluded, but a band of men, at the same time, and

[9] Acts, 5.

on the same subject, and in a tranquil, firm, constant and patient manner,— never!

"Apprehending Paul and Silas, they brought them to the rulers and said: These men disturb our city, being Jews, and preach a fashion which it is not lawful for us to receive, being Romans. And the magistrates rending off their garments commanded them to be beaten with rods, and when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison." [10]

That was the treatment they received, and it was that way everywhere and always with the Apostles, and it continued that way until a violent death ended their labors and sufferings. What fools they were unless they had evidence of the Resurrection!

Now mark this particular thing. There is a difference between the stubborn and fanatical man who is insane, or infatuated with his own notions, and the man who perseveringly suffers in behalf of an idea or cause that is not his own, nor to his advantage. All the freaks and extremists of history have been persons carried away by their own importance or advantage. They suffered and sometimes died for their own notions. That, at its best, is individual sincerity. It does not indicate any objective truth. It is a mere subjective condition. Such men we pity, or, if they threaten detriment to the community,

[10] Acts, 16.

we repress them. In that case, a person is a martyr to himself, to his own ideas.

Now that was not the case with the Apostles. They were martyrs in the true sense. They were witnesses not to their own ideas but to Christ's. A martyr means a witness. The Apostles were witnesses to something that was not of their own devising or creation, but to an objective fact, the Resurrection, and to the doctrine of the Risen Christ. They were no more interested in it than anybody else, unless it were a true objective reality. In that case, the Resurrection was not merely an isolated fact, but a *sign* and a *credential* of Christ and His mission. As such they proclaimed it.

Christ had said: "He who confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven;" "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it;" "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul;" "I am the Resurrection and the Life, he who believeth in me shall not die forever."

The Resurrection made all that and thousands of other teachings of Christ absolutely true. The Resurrection caused the Apostles to base their lives on the doctrine of Christ. The Resurrection proves that the Apostles were not fools, but the wisest of men. For their whole enterprise was founded on His words who rose from the dead and who was con-

sequently what He claimed to be, the true Son of God.

That explains the life and labors and sufferings of the Apostles. That enables us to understand this sublime ejaculation of Paul: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness, or danger? or persecution? or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome, because of him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [11]

And none of these things did separate the disciple from the Master. The servant did not look for better treatment than his Lord had. And so he was able at the end to say cordially and triumphantly: "For I am even now ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day, and not only to me, but to them also that love His coming." [12]

That was the statement of a strong, brave, balanced man in the presence of death. It is the utter-

[11] Rom. 8. [12] II Tim. 4.

ance not only of subjective sincerity, but of objective truth. What he said, before he went forth from his prison to be killed for Christ, all the other Apostles said under the same or similar circumstances.

If the Resurrection were not true, the twelve sanest, most upright, most constant and most consistent men in the world were fools. But consistency, uprightness and sanity do not spring from a disordered imagination. The Resurrection was therefore a reality.

I now proceed to show that, even if the Apostles wished to promulgate the Resurrection as the chief credential of Christianity, they could not have done so if it were not true. This is the *second* consideration I present to corroborate the foregoing thesis.

Before I give this demonstration, I wish to say that the proofs already given, or any one of them, are conclusive evidence for the truth of the Resurrection, but when we take the various proofs cumulatively they present overwhelming evidence. But because there are various viewpoints on any subject, this further evidence which will be presented is given, in order to meet every phase of mind and every form of objection.

Hence we say, *in the second place,* the Apostles could not make the Resurrection the basis of the establishment of Christianity if they wished to, unless the Resurrection were true. For, to begin with,

they would have to concur in the fraud they were to proclaim, and agree to openly announce it in the presence of the magistrates and people of Jerusalem, and to suffer opposition, ignominy, exile, stripes and death for a *lie,* the establishment of which, even if they succeeded, would bring them nothing that men care for, but rather everything that men ordinarily shrink from. Could the perpetration of an infamous fraud induce normal men to lose everything and suffer everything, even death?

And even if it could, their attempt to propagate it would never have made any headway. Truth succeeds in spite of obstacles and persecution. Fraud cannot succeed *permanently,* even with every human contrivance and under the most favorable circumstances. In the case of the Resurrection, all the circumstances were most unfavorable to fraud. Therefore the Apostles could not have propagated a fraudulent Resurrection even if they wished.

If the Resurrection were a fraud, it would have been necessary for the chief plotters to deceive the many disciples who declared they had seen the Risen Saviour. At one time as many as five hundred were assembled when Jesus stood in their midst. Now, unless they really beheld the Risen Lord, they would not have so announced the fact, and in doing so, suffer all the persecution which the chief plotters incurred. The fact of the Resurrection was as astounding to them as it is to us. They were as scep-

tical as any of us. Yet in consequence of what they beheld with their own eyes, they became believers in the religion of Christ.

It was simply impossible for the Apostles to work off a fraud on so many witnesses, especially when the consequences of the fraud entailed unheard of sacrifices. Therefore, even if they wished, the Apostles could not proclaim the Resurrection unless it were true.

Moreover, if the Resurrection were not true, it would be necessary to impose a fraud on people most hostile to its reception. The Jews were the bitterest enemies of Christ, and the pagans were most antagonistic to His whole mission. Yet these were the people whom the poor, simple fishermen of Galilee were to make their dupes! There is nothing more preposterous in all history.

The Jew did not give up his tradition, nor did the pagan give up his idolatry and vices, without a struggle. Yet on the first sermon on the Resurrection, three thousand Jews became converts. And after a short period, the pagan converts were so many in all parts of the Roman Empire that Tertullian could say in his Apology to the Emperor: "If we were to withdraw from you, the Empire would be a desert." [13]

And Pliny: "The contagion of Christian superstition is not confined to the cities, it has invaded the

[13] Apolog. c. 37.

villages and the country, and has taken possession of persons of every age, rank and sex. Our temples are almost entirely abandoned, and the religious ceremonies neglected." [14] A fraud never did that.

The Apostle sums up the matter when he says: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. . . . The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong." [15]

To suppose for a moment that the Apostles could establish a religion based on the Resurrection without giving the clearest proof of the Resurrection, makes a bigger demand on our credulity than the Resurrection itself. For the religion based on the Resurrection obliged men to place their lives on a supernatural foundation.

Now why should men build on such a foundation unless it was certain? One man might be deceived, or ten men, but not millions of men. Ten millions might be deceived if there was something in the new religion which flattered human pride or passion.

But it was just the reverse. The doctrine of the

[14] Epis. no. 97. [15] I Cor. 1. 23.

Christian faith obliged the intellect to bow down before incomprehensible truths and the passions to be controlled by the loftiest morality. And besides, Christianity entailed in most cases the greatest sufferings and sacrifices ever demanded of mankind. Unless, therefore, the Resurrection was clearly demonstrated to the first believers and confirmed by miracles, the religion of Christ never would have gained adherents.

The Resurrection was the sign pointed out by Christ as the credential of His divine mission. The Resurrection was the credential presented by the Apostles in preaching the doctrine of Christ. As Christianity was actually established, and that by reason of the Resurrection, it follows logically that, as the establishment of Christianity is a fact beyond human power to accomplish, so is the Resurrection a fact, divine and true.

In order to show still more evidently the miraculousness of the establishment of Christianity, we shall consider briefly what it entailed on its followers. This consideration, by showing the utter impossibility of establishing Christianity by human means will confirm the truth of the Resurrection. A divine effect demands a divine cause. It will be made evident from the following facts that the conversion of the Roman Empire was a divine effect, consequently its cause, the Resurrection, was divine, and true.

To become a Christian in the Roman Empire

meant a complete reversal of all one's national, social and personal ideas, customs and morals. No such complete reversal has occurred in the history of mankind before or since. If this change were brought about by sages or by powerful rulers or by the force of arms or by worldly inducements, it would still be the most wonderful change ever recorded among men. Indeed, with all the above named agencies, it could not be done. Time and again, superior and more powerful governments have endeavored to change the national character of a weaker people, but without success.

Now Christianity, with no such agencies whatsoever, not only changed a nation and its most fundamental characteristics, but changed an empire, the greatest the world has known, and transformed it radically and permanently. That was using the weak things of this world to confound the strong. It was God's work, not man's. Man was but the instrument. This will appear presently.

There was, humanly speaking, no proportion between the marvelous effect and the insignificant natural cause. On the one hand was the greatest empire in the world, on the other, a band of twelve simple men, who were rejected by their own people. Yet these rejected ones, of a despised and subject race, accomplished a fundamental alteration in the most powerful empire of history.

But in saying this, we have adverted to the least

wonderful item of this marvelous event. It was not so much the disparity of cause and effect that surpasses understanding, as the nature of the revolution brought about. In order to understand the impossibility, from a human standpoint, of effecting this transformation, let us consider the following points: the ideas which the pagan intellect had to accept; the manner of life the pagan had to adopt; and the price the pagan had to pay for his conversion.

As regards the first point, the ideas which Christianity imposed on the pagan world, we know that in the time of Christ the pagans believed in a multiplicity of gods. Government and religion were firmly based on that belief. Christianity taught that there was but one God, and that all the deities the pagans worshipped were nothing but fabrications. That was a terrible blow to the haughty pagan mind.

Christianity taught an incomprehensible mystery in regard to the one God, that there were three Persons in the Deity. For this they gave no demonstration, merely asserting it on the word of Christ, and offering no proof but the Resurrection. Christianity taught that God made all things out of nothing, by a creative act, Himself being eternal, self-existing, omnipotent and omniscient. That went directly against all the pagan notions of the origin of the world. It flatly contradicted all their cherished ideas.

Christianity taught that God truly became man,

that Christ was God and man, the only Son of the eternal Father. And yet this God-man was crucified as an evil-doer by His own people. The pagans were thus required to worship one condemned as a criminal by their own tribunal.

Christianity taught that the God-man was truly present in the Eucharist, and that He was given as food for the spiritual nourishment of His followers, that they ate His body and drank His blood in receiving holy Communion. What an inconceivable idea for the pagan intellect!

I might continue to name dogmas of the religion of Christ which were to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the pagans foolishness. But I have given enough to show that inherently Christianity presented to the pagan mind doctrines which no human power could succeed in getting accepted. But these dogmas were accepted! How? It was the Resurrection.

That was the sign Christ pointed to as His great credential. That was the proof given by the Apostles for their claims. The pagans made sure of the truth of the Resurrection, and then they knew that what Christ taught was true.

Next, as regards the morality inculcated by Christianity, it will be seen that the difficulty here was just as great as in the case of dogma. For the pagan was a law unto himself. He satisfied his passions as he liked and made his vices respectable by fashion-

ing a god unto them and worshipping it. That was the charm of idolatry.

We can form no idea of the state of pagan morals at the time of Christ. The very worst blots on modern civilization, the things which, if done at all, are done secretly and of which people are ashamed, were done openly and glorified by the pagans. There were exceptions here and there, but I am speaking, not of isolated cases, but of the general tone of pagan society, high and low.

Vice was degrading and general. Temples and shrines and statues were erected to deities of immorality. The rites observed and the deeds performed in this worship would shock even vulgar people today. It was this cesspool of voluptuousness that the stern morality of Jesus Christ was to change into the pure fountains of living waters. The attitude of the pagan mind to the morality of Christ was as antagonistic as anything that it is possible for the human mind to conceive of.

Yet Christian morality replaced pagan vice. What did it? No power of man. Socrates and Plato and other sages had endeavored to effect a change in the ways of mankind, but they got only a small following and that in academic fashion. But Christianity got a world wide following, and that in the practical lives of its adherents.

Imagine what a barrier to the acceptance of Christianity among that people was such moral teaching

as the following: "You have heard that it was said to them of old, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you that whosoever shall look on woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." [16]; "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." [17]

The teaching of Christ went to the very root of the matter. It meant a radical change in the entire pagan system. Yet that change was effected. The truth of the Resurrection was so manifest that it put the divine seal on the mission of Christ, clothing Him with the power of Almighty God, making His words absolutely true, and sanctioning all His teaching.

The pagans bowed down their intellect to the truths preached by Christ, and conformed their lives to the morals He proclaimed, because they knew from the Resurrection that He was God legislating for them. Otherwise, how could they have accepted a religion which went directly against all their received notions?

We know how proud and cruel and unjust and arbitrary were these men of Greece and Rome. In Attica the official census made by Demetrius Phalereus gave the population as 60,000. Of these, 40,000 were slaves. At the time of Christ, the majority of mankind were slaves. The great Aristotle taught that "nature requires that there be slaves." Cato the philosopher shows us that the slave was re-

[16] Matt. 5. 27. [17] Matt. 5. 8.

garded as a mere commodity: "A wise husbandman must get rid of all implements no longer in use, worn out ploughs, old horses, aged slaves."

When a slave got sick, or maimed, or old, he was thrown out to starve and die, or else put to death. To lessen the expense of the animals kept for the circus, Caligula ordered them to be fed with slaves. The Romans had an expression to show the legal status of the slave: "Slaves are not entitled to leisure, they have no standing before the law, they do not count as persons."

With such a cruel and unjust world, what chance had the religion of the meek and humble Christ, Himself scourged as a slave and crucified as a malefactor by order of a Roman governor! Unless the Resurrection confirmed His teaching as divine, could such doctrine as the following ever gain admittance into pagan society and finally dominate it? These precepts are the very antithesis of everything pagan:

"All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them." [18]

"You have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." [19]

"If any man will come after me, let him deny

[18] Matt. 7. 12. [19] Matt. 5. 43.

himself and take up his cross and follow me. For he that will save his life shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it." [20]

Only God could talk that way. Only God could make such demands and guarantee such recompense. And what made the pagans listen to His message and lay down their lives for Him? It was because the Resurrection, to which He pointed as the divine sign confirming His words, was made manifest to them.

The Greeks and Romans had greater reason to question the Resurrection than we have. They questioned it, you may be sure, with the result that they believed it, and believed in Christ, the Son of God, and gave their lives in testimony of their faith.

This leads me to the consideration of the *third* factor in regard to the establishment of Christianity. For the pagan had not only to accept mysteries beyond his understanding, and morality which revolutionized his manner of living, but, in most cases during the first centuries, he had to pay the price of imprisonment, torture and death for his new religion. He thus had to lower his pride of intellect and curb his lust of pleasure, and, at the same time, pay for it the greatest price that a man can give. Now men do not bind themselves thus and pay the supreme price for their bonds except for good cause. The good cause was the Resurrection, for in its truth they

[20] Matt. 16. 24.

realized that the bonds were to make them free with the freedom of the children of God.

And now for a brief statement of the unparalleled sufferings which the early pagan converts endured for embracing the religion founded on the Resurrection.

The persecution of the Christians was both general and bloody. From Nero to Constantine, millions of the best subjects of the Roman world were scourged, imprisoned, exiled, devoured by beasts, burned alive and beheaded for Christ. Ten distinct general persecutions were inaugurated by the Roman emperors. Diocletian took such severe measures for the repression of Christianity that he had a medal struck in commemoration of what he supposed was the end of that religion. This is the inscription: "Nomine christianorum deleto" (The Christians are no more). It is estimated that from nine to eleven millions of Christians were tortured during these ten persecutions. With what result? "The blood of martyrs became the seed of Christians." The Roman Empire became Christian.

Nor can it be said that this fortitude was the result of a wave of fanaticism. First of all, fanaticism does not last that long, and secondly, fanaticism must be nourished by frenzy. But there was none of the frenzy of fanaticism about the Christian martyrs. They were calm, patient, forgiving, even praying for their torturers. They realized the great sacrifice they were making.

There were heart-breaking separations of husbands from wives, and daughters from parents, and aged fathers and mothers from beloved children. But it was borne patiently and encouragingly for Christ. Mothers exhorted their sons to courage before their tormentors, and children chanted hymns of praise when ordered to be devoured by wild beasts, advancing to torture as recollectedly and cheerfully as if going to a festival.

There was no rancor, no malice, no excitement, no emotionalism, about the martyrs. A lofty exhilaration based on the certainty of the Resurrection and of their own resurrection was their chief characteristic. As Stephen, the first martyr, prayed for those who were stoning him to death, so the millions of Christian martyrs prayed for those who turned the wild beasts loose on them, or put the torch to their pitch covered bodies, or tied them up in sacks with serpents to drown in the sea, or cut off their hands and feet, or had them tied to the heels of horses driven furiously. No manner of torture known to the brutality of that brutal age was spared the Christians. Yet they endured patiently and gladly for the name of Christ.

This is all so well known that it is not necessary to go into details. Any Church History of the period will give countless, well authenticated cases. Seneca, the pagan classic writer, states that the martyrs endured all that human barbarity could invent.

Tacitus, also, says that the tortures inflicted on the Christians caused the most exquisite pains.

The absence of frenzy is the most notable thing about the Christian martyrs. They were gentle and calm amidst indescribable torments. Not only men, but little children and weak women showed the fortitude of heroes. This very calmness and the forgiving spirit of the martyrs caused innumerable conversions. The common sense of the spectators caused them to see that there was something more than human in the religion which inspired such fortitude, patience, prayerfulness and forgiveness.

As the thief on the cross was converted by the marvelous gentleness and patience of Jesus, so were many by-standers brought to the religion of the Crucified by the calmness and resignation of His followers during their passion. Thus Tertullian writes: "The more they slay us, the more we multiply, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of new Christians."

The peace and serenity which the martyrs displayed often caused the conversion of their very executioners and judges. I wish to bring this point out strongly, for it shows that what impelled the early Christians to suffer so heroically for Christ was not fanaticism, but a real, substantial and most firm conviction of the truth of the Resurrection.

They accepted that credential for the truth of Christ's divine mission, and consequently realized that, in losing their life for His sake, they were find-

ing it anew in His kingdom. There is no other possible explanation for the constancy, fortitude, peacefulness and serenity of the millions of martyrs who suffered excruciatingly during two hundred years and in all parts of the Roman world.

Moral strength of such a nature does not belong to humanity. We might find it here and there, at certain periods, and for a short while, but to find it everywhere, among every class and condition of mankind, and for hundreds of years, amidst the most prolonged and exquisite tortures, means that God sustained them, and that consequently their faith was divine.

Not one of these millions of martyrs was obliged to suffer. It was voluntary on their part. One word from them would have prevented or stopped their martyrdom. They merely had to say that they renounced Christ. But the truth of the Resurrection was so manifest to them that they preferred to lay down their lives for Christ rather than to retain life by rejecting Him.

Under the Emperors Diocletian and Maximus, the number of martyrs according to tradition was two million! They issued an edict "to tear down the churches to the foundations and to destroy the Sacred Scriptures by fire, to imprison Bishops, priests and deacons and to compel them by every torture to renounce Christianity; to subject the laity to every manner of torture in order to force them to sacrifice

to the pagan deities.[21] In one case the whole population of a town was massacred because they declared themselves Christians.[22] It was after these drastic measures that the Emperors had the medal struck stating that Christianity was at last destroyed.

But Christianity was not destroyed. The emperors and their pagan empire passed away, but Christianity not only did not pass away, but remained and flourished, and spite of every obstacle and opposition, it spread over the whole world, until today we see it everywhere. It thus fulfilled the prophecy of its Founder, and this fulfillment in its turn becomes one of the greatest credentials of Christianity.

Unless God were with His Church, it had never survived the persecutions from without and the heresies from within. But Christ guaranteed His presence unto His Church, and that presence explains its life. "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." [23]

These words were spoken by Christ after His Resurrection. They were almost the last words spoken

[21] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. VIII: 2.
[22] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. VIII: 12.
[23] Matt. 28. 18.

by Him to the Apostles. If you observe, He says: "Behold *I am* with you all days." He does not say: *I shall be* with you, but *I am* with you all days. Only God can speak thus, for to God alone the future is present. There is no past or future with God,— all is present. That is why Christ said to the Jews: "Before Abraham was made, *I am.*"

That was the name God gave Himself when He commissioned Moses to be the leader of the Israelites, *I am who am.* Jehovah is the Hebrew word for that expression. It means that God is the *Being Existing Always.*

And because Christ is God, the Always Existent Being, He said: "*I am* with you to the consummation of the world." Hence it is that His Church has always been divinely sustained. Were it not for that, the early persecutions would indeed have annihilated Christianity.

The faith of those early Christians was based on the Resurrection. By that they knew that Christ was what He said He was, for He appealed to the Resurrection as a confirmation of His divine claims. As the Resurrection required a divine power, it was the divine seal on Christ's mission. That was clear to the early Christians. That was why they believed and gave their lives for their belief.

The establishment of Christianity, therefore, was something beyond human power to effect. The doctrines it taught, the morals it inculcated, and the

persecutions which accompanied it, made it humanly impossible to succeed. The one reason given by the Apostles and their successors for its acceptance was the Resurrection.

The Establishment being an undoubted fact, so was its cause, the Resurrection, a fact. The Establishment being a fact beyond human power, so was its cause, the Resurrection, a fact beyond human power. The Resurrection was therefore a divine fact, the seal of God Almighty on the mission of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God.

CHAPTER VIII

CHRIST HIMSELF

THERE was really no need of Christ's giving a sign as the credential of His nature and mission. He Himself was the very best credential. For never was there a personality like His in the world. Even those who do not accept His religion affirm that He is as far superior to the rest of mankind as heaven is above earth.

The words of Rosseau will bear repetition: "Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God, . . . and the facts in the life of Socrates are not as well attested as those in the life of Jesus Christ." That is the estimate of a man who was not a Christian. It may be asked, how could he help belonging to the religion of Christ if he held Him in such high regard?

Faith is something more than a syllogism. Intellect and reasoning are not enough to make one a follower of the meek and humble Jesus. The heart must be right, the intellect must bow down in humility. If we approach Christ merely to analyze and dissect Him, we shall not find His divinity. A

surgeon never yet saw the human soul, no matter how often or thoroughly he dissected the living or dead. But any surgeon may see the soul in the laughter of a child; or in the eyes of a mother as they beam on her babe.

And so if we would see the divinity of Jesus Christ, we must look at Him with our hearts as well as with our heads. And the heart must be clean and sincere. Pride of intellect was Satan's sin. It made him refuse to acknowledge the authority of God. That same pride of intellect makes many refuse to acknowledge the divinity of Christ. They prefer to worship their own intellect rather than Him who gave it to them.

The question before us, therefore, is, has Christ given us such evidence of His divinity that, if we wish to consider it as we do other things in life, we must believe Him to be God? And if we believe Him to be God, is it not our duty to trust Him and believe Him, rather than to understand Him?

If therefore He gives us truths which are above our comprehension, our duty is to bow down and adore. We daily surrender our judgment to experts in their respective lines. God asks us to bow down our judgment to His. If He did not ask that much of us He would not be God.

The very objection, therefore, of infidels and rationalists, that they cannot altogether understand His doctrine, becomes an argument for the divinity of

Christ. For if He were not God, He never could have proposed for our acceptance ideas which the human mind could never have conceived of itself, and which, after being proposed, still remain incomprehensible.

I intend to show, therefore, that the teaching of Jesus and the deeds of Jesus and the personality of Jesus are just what we should expect from God. Also it will appear that everything He said and did and was, becomes absolutely incomprehensible unless He was God.

If He were not God, His words are the most insane nonsense that ever came from a disordered brain. But Christ's whole life shows that never was there on this earth a person with such poise and judgment and dignity and sanity as He always displayed. This is acknowledged by all. Realizing therefore that He was a supremely sane man, let us consider His words and see how very consistent they are with divinity, and how absolutely inconsistent they are with anything less than divinity.

In the first place, I shall show that Christ made Himself the equal of Almighty God. Now, if He were not insane, that was a claim which He never would have made unless He was God. Afterwards I shall show that He acted in all things as Almighty God would act, thus proving by deeds the truth of what He declared by word. If therefore there are

some who admit Christ's words, but hold that He did not mean them in their true sense, they are confronted with His deeds, which are exactly in conformity with the obvious sense of His words.

Jesus Himself, knowing that His claims were altogether beyond anything that a created being could make, was very considerate with His hearers. He was not astonished at their surprise on hearing Him declare He was God. On a certain occasion He said: "I and the Father are one." [1] The Jews were so incensed at this that they actually took up stones to stone Him. That shows that they understood Him in the true sense.

Jesus, in His consideration for them, said: "Many good works I have shown you from my Father, for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him: For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because thou being a man, makest thyself God." [2]

You see there was no misunderstanding what He meant. It was not Oriental exaggeration or poetic imagery. He said: "I and the Father are one," and they took His words in their literal and true sense, and accused Him of blasphemy. If He were not speaking with the exact meaning of the words, they would not have thus accused Him of a sin punishable by death. You know He was the

[1] John, 10. 30. [2] John, 10. 33.

only person in the world who was able to say: "Which of you shall convince me of sin?" [3] If He blasphemed in this case, He was guilty of a most dreadful sin.

But hear His reply to their charge, and see if anyone could meet the accusation more wisely or more sincerely: "Do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in the Father." [4]

Jesus refers constantly to the Father as God Almighty. When He was dying on the Cross, He said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." [5] It was to God He was commending His soul, and He calls Him Father. Again He said: "I came forth from the Father and am come into this world; again I leave the world, and I go to the Father. His disciples say to him: Behold now thou speakest plainly, now we know that thou knowest all things. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God." [6]

In this text the Father is clearly identified with God, as in many other texts. I specify this, because in the passages which I shall give presently, Christ constantly refers to Himself as doing what the Fa-

[3] John, 8. 46.
[4] John, 10. 36.
[5] Luke, 23. 46.
[6] John, 10. 28.

ther does, and being what the Father is. These preliminary remarks will prepare us for a full appreciation of the magnitude and the literal meaning of Christ's assertions as to who and what He is.

I shall now present His declarations, and I challenge anyone to say that they could be uttered by a sane person unless that person was God.

"The high priest said to him: Art thou the Christ the Son of the blessed God? And Jesus said to him: I am." [7] When Jesus made that declaration, He was solemnly adjured by the living God to say who He was. His reply was direct, clear, absolute. He said He was the Son of God.

The Jews understood Him to mean that He was truly God, the same as Jehovah, for they said: "You have heard the blasphemy. What think you? Who all condemned him to be guilty of death." [8] This declaration of Christ's was a confirmation of His divinity which He had proclaimed so often in the course of His teaching and conversation.

Witness the following statements which none but a crazy man could make except it was God Himself speaking:

"All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine"; [9]

"I am the light of the world"; [10]

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that be-

[7] Mark, 14. 61.
[8] Mark, 14. 64.
[9] John, 16. 15.
[10] John, 8. 12.

lieveth in me, although he be dead shall live"; [11]

"I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me"; [12]

"All power is given to me in heaven and in earth"; [13]

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"; [14]

"Going therefore teach ye all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world"; [15]

"Before Abraham was made, I am"; [16]

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"; [17]

"Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou has given me may be with me, that they may see my glory, which thou has given me because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world"; [18]

"Father, all my things are thine, and thine are mine"; [19]

[11] John, 11. 25.
[12] John, 14. 6.
[13] Matt. 28. 18.
[14] Matt. 10. 37.
[15] Matt. 28. 20.
[16] John, 8. 58.
[17] John, 17. 3.
[18] John, 17. 24.
[19] John, 17. 10.

"For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting"; [20]

"The woman saith to him: I know that the Messias cometh (who is called Christ), therefore when he is come he will tell us all things. Jesus saith to her: I am he"; [21]

"Every one that confesseth me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven"; [22]

"Dost thou believe in the Son of God? Answering, he said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him, and it is he who talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord; and falling down he adored him"; [23]

"What things soever the Father doth, these the Son also doth in like manner. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom he will, that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father." [24]

That is clearly identifying Himself with Almighty God, affirming equal power with God, claiming equal reverence with God, demanding equal service with God. Is that not speaking as God?

Who but God has a right to our love in preference

[20] John, 3. 16.
[21] John, 4. 25.
[22] Matt. 10. 32.
[23] John, 9. 36.
[24] John, 5. 19.

to father and mother and son and daughter? Who but God can ask us to lay down our life and assure us that in so doing we are saving it? Who but God can say: All power is Mine in heaven and in earth? Who but God can give commandments to all the nations of the earth?

Unless Christ is indeed God, the real substantial Son of the eternal God, all His words are the worst blasphemy or the greatest nonsense. His words therefore are His credential. We must either believe what He says, or put Him down insane.

The Roman centurion who presided over the Crucifixion and witnessed the serene, forgiving and patient Christ die on the Cross, pronounced the right estimate on Jesus when he said: "Indeed, this man was the Son of God." [25] That soldier was not an idealist or an enthusiast. He was a plain common sense man. And the character of Jesus so impressed him that he proclaimed the divinity of the man he had executed.

And the thief alongside Jesus, nailed to a cross, also read His character rightly when he said: "Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom." [26] A rough soldier and a hardened criminal, men accustomed to hard facts, men devoid of sentiment, men who knew humanity, saw Jesus in His supreme hour of trial, the hour that tests the

[25] Matt. 27. 54.
[26] Luke, 23. 42.

soul and the mind, and their judgment was that He was what He said He was.

We know how fanatics and deluded men die. We know their extravagance and their frenzy. But in the whole life of Jesus, as well as in His death, there is not one incident that does not show the most absolute calm and poise and judgment. He therefore who spoke those words proclaiming His equality with God did so because He was in very truth the Son of God.

His whole career stands out as that of a person of supreme sagacity and judgment. This is manifest not only in the wonderful prudence He displayed on every occasion, but also and especially in His discourses. It is impossible to conceive of anything more perfect and sublime than the teaching of Christ.

His precepts force even rationalists to express the highest admiration for Him. Strauss says: "The moral teaching of Christ is the foundation of human civilization, . . . the Jesus of history is a type of moral perfection." Renan observes: "The teaching of Jesus is the most beautiful moral teaching which humanity has received. . . . Each one of us owes to it all that is best in him. . . . The Sermon on the Mount will never be surpassed."

The Person who taught the world its sublimest morality was neither insane nor under a delusion. And this Person speaks just as He who is God should speak. His words therefore are His credentials to

divinity. You must prove that Jesus Christ is either a fool or an impostor if you want to set aside His divinity.

This will appear even more evident when we consider the deeds of Jesus in conjunction with His words. For He actually exercised a power which belongs to God alone. If His words declared Him to be the Son of God, His deeds confirmed His declarations. In all things He acted as a divine Person. He spoke as never man spoke before. He constantly displayed a power which none but God Himself could exert. He exercised prerogatives which appertain exclusively to God Almighty.

It belongs to God to forgive sins. In His own name and by His own authority, Christ forgave sins. Of course anyone may say to another: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." That proves nothing. Christ knew that. That is why He said to the astonished bystanders: "That you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said he to the man sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. And he arose and went into his house." [27]

When Christ said to this paralytic: "Thy sins are forgiven thee," the multitude whispered that only God could forgive sins. He took them at their word, and, to show He was God, He not only forgave sins, but confirmed the forgiveness by a divine act.

[27] Matt. 9. 6.

He therefore acted as He who is God should act, forgiving offences committed against God.

Another exercise of divine power was His making laws for all mankind. Only God has the right to legislate for the entire human race. Christ did that.

"Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned." [28]

"A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another." [29]

"You have heard that it hath been said: thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But *I* say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." [30]

"Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth my word and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting, and cometh not unto judgment, but is passed from death to life." [31]

Not only does He legislate for mankind, but He moreover sets Himself up as universal Judge:

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then will he render to every man according to his works." [32]

[28] Mark, 16. 15.
[29] John, 13. 34.
[30] Matt. 5. 43.
[31] John, 5. 25.
[32] Matt. 16. 27.

"And when the Son of man shall come in his majesty and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another"; [33]

"The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." [34]

Was it possible for Christ to assume such authority over all mankind if He was not the real Son of God?

In the old law, God Himself commanded the Sabbath to be kept holy. When the Jews found fault with Christ for healing on the Sabbath, He declared: "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." [35] He thus identified Himself with the God of the Ten Commandments, the great Jehovah, who legislated for all mankind and was Lord of the Sabbath.

In another very noticeable way He assumed divine power when, in His own name and by His own authority, He showed He was the Author of life:

"Behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, he said to her: Weep not. And he came near

[33] Matt. 25. 31.
[34] John, 5. 28.
[35] Luke, 6. 5.

and touched the bier, and they that carried it stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother." [36]

That was clearly the exercise of divine power. Christ made no appeal to any power above, He made use of no remedies, He went through no formalities of any kind. He simply spoke the word, and the lifeless clay became a living being. It was by a word only that God made all things in the beginning. By a word only, Christ made that corpse to be a living soul. It was an act of divine power.

On another occasion, "when he entered into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat was covered with waves, but he was asleep. And they came to him and awaked him saying: Lord, save us, we perish. And Jesus saith to them: Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up, he commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm." [37]

Truly God-like! A man may command men. Only God can command the elements.

Let us pause here for a moment and reflect. If God really came on earth and stood before you, and you wished Him to do something divine, could you ask anything more of Him than Christ has actually done? He forgave sins, made laws for all mankind,

[36] Luke, 7. 12. [37] Matt. 8. 24.

declared Himself universal Judge of the living and the dead, proclaimed Himself Lord of the Sabbath, raised the dead to life, and commanded nature, which obeyed Him as a servant obeys a master.

How can His divinity and the divinity of Christianity be doubted! It never would be doubted if it did not require mankind to live a life raised above passion and evil tendencies. It never would be doubted if it permitted man to be a law unto himself. It would never be doubted if it flattered the pride of man.

The evidence for the divinity of Christ is so clear from the Gospels that one must reject them altogether or accept the divine claims of Jesus. Rejection of the Gospels is the only way out of it. Those who try to explain away the clear meaning of Christ's words when He declares He is the Son of God are confronted by His actions, which are in full harmony with His literal claims to divinity.

He not only says He is the Son of God, the real Son of God, but He lives up to the idea of the real Son of God. In all His deeds He comports Himself as God. Those therefore who reject the Gospels as a true record are the only ones who proceed with a semblance of logic. They are more consistent than any others.

But these too have the ground taken from under them by the fact that the critical and scientific scholars of the world are agreed that the Gospels are

genuine. No document of history was ever so violently assailed as the Gospels, and no document ever came through the ordeal so triumphantly.

Today, after the most critical scrutiny of everything bearing on these writings, the Gospels stand forth as true history. They mark the turning point of the world. We number our years from the Christ of the Gospels. We call the period beginning with the Gospels the Christian era. There was no Sunday before the Resurrection of Christ. These, and countless other facts, attest the reality of Christ and the significance of His mission among men.

Therefore men of science, materialists, rationalists, infidels, all you who refuse to accept Christianity, on what grounds do you do so? Is it because the wish is father to the thought? Is it because its morality is too lofty? But do you realize that all the kindly influences of the age in which you live are due to that same morality? If, spite of Christianity, human nature is as vicious as it is, what would it be if Christ had never come and if His benign influence had never been felt?

The personality of Jesus Christ and His teaching have transformed the world. I shall now proceed to demonstrate this statement. It will be another proof, if such be needed, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that Christianity is divine.

The great outstanding feature of Christ's character is His disinterestedness. He did not come to do

His own will, He did not live for His own welfare. He came to do the will of His Father and He was obedient unto death. In that obedience He did not consider His own comfort or advantages, but solely the welfare of the human race. He impressed on the world by His words, and especially by His life, the great fact of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

These truths were the working principle of Christianity, and I now invite you to consider their remarkable and truly supernatural effects in the world. Nothing but a divine cause could effect the changes I shall enumerate.

Human culture, civilization, the wisest of sages and the greatest of rulers, had done all in their power when Christianity appeared, but with little or no results, for the amelioration of the masses of mankind. But the teaching, the example and the personality of Christ, operating through Christianity, accomplished what was humanly impossible. For though Jesus came primarily, not for the bestowal of temporal or material benefits, but for our eternal welfare, nevertheless His spirit and His law actually guide men to a happier and better existence on this earth also.

His personality pervades His religion. And the main thing about His personality was His absolute regard for the will of His Father. That it was which dominated His life, His discourses and His

doctrine. And that is the character impressed on His religion. For Christianity directs us, above all else, to do God's will: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

In doing God's will we are doing what is best for us here and hereafter. Christianity not only commands us to do that will, but also tells us definitely what it is. God Almighty speaks to us, not directly, but by His appointed means, the Church: "He that heareth you, heareth me." [38]

Now Jesus in His own person shows us that the greatest thing in life is God's will. In the Garden of Gethsemani His utterance was: "Not my will, but thine be done." [39] Again He said: "I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me"; [40] and in another place, "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." [41] Christ set so much store by the will of God that He declared: "For whosoever shall do the will of God, he is my brother." [42]

The object of Christianity is therefore the same as that which Christ had on earth, namely, to bring men to respect and do the will of God. "If thou wilt enter into life everlasting, keep the commandments." [43] "If you love me, keep my commandments." [44] Christ made the keeping of the com-

[38] Luke, 10. 16.
[39] Luke, 22. 42.
[40] John, 5. 30.
[41] John, 6. 38.
[42] Mark, 3. 35.
[43] Matt. 19. 17.
[44] John, 14. 15.

mandments the test of love for Him and the pledge of eternal life.

It will be observed from a comparison of these two texts just cited that Christ calls the commandments "My commandments." It was God Himself who gave the commandments on Mt. Sinai. Jesus here designates them as His commandments, thus speaking as God Himself. And as God He tells us that the commandments are the way to our last end, union with our Father in heaven.

It was this very thing which operated so powerfully through Christianity to effect the wonderful transformation and betterment of mankind which we shall consider in our next chapter. For the great source of evil in the world is man's doing his own will rather than God's. Man wants to do his own will, to be a law unto himself. That is the main reason for opposition to Christianity.

But God's way is always the best way. Man, in following his own will makes himself his own lawgiver. And as his passions urge him to self-indulgence, he seeks his own gratification at the cost of justice and consideration for others. That brings about oppression, greed, selfishness, and all the train of miseries which human nature is heir to.

The personality of Christ, divinely submissive, teaches the world not to seek its own will, but God's will. It teaches mankind that right and justice and charity are supreme. And when these principles pre-

vail, man is better here as well as hereafter. "Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and his justice" [45] That was Christ's spirit and it marked His personality throughout. His followers practising His precepts and imitating His example have transformed the world, as we shall see.

Jesus Christ, therefore, by His words and His deeds and His personality, stands out divine. His words proclaim His divinity, His deeds illustrate His divinity, His character manifests His divinity. He is His own greatest credential. Nothing like unto Him has ever been in the world and never will be: "I am Alpha and Omega,"[46] the first and the last, the beginning of all things and the end of all; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, . . . and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." [47]

Jesus Christ was therefore the Word made flesh. With us a word is the outward manifestation of our mind. It expresses exteriorly our invisible thought. Jesus Christ expresses visibly the invisible God. By the Incarnation, He became flesh, that is, He assumed human nature and dwelt among us as the God-man, manifesting the Deity to our mortal sight.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. . . . He was in the

[45] Matt. 6. 33.
[46] Apoc. 1. 8.
[47] John, 1. 1.

world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came into his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God." [48]

This was the proclamation of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Mankind inculcated by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It was the divine seed which has developed into the tree of Christianity which now overspreads the earth. Some of its fruits we shall now behold as we consider the condition of mankind as a result of the divine personality of Jesus Christ and the message which He brought to this world from His eternal Father.

[48] John, 1. 4.

CHAPTER IX

CHRIST AND THE WORLD

A CREED that is from God must enable man to meet the vicissitudes of life beneficially. It is preposterous to conceive that the Creator would fashion man so exquisitely only to make of him an endurance machine. A wise maker could not create merely to afflict.

And in the end, what is every life but an affliction? For death is our end. And death is preceded by a painful illness or a frightful accident. No one can escape those two visitations. What a termination for the masterpiece of creation and for the lords of the earth!

The works of man himself have a better destiny than man himself, unless suffering and death end in something else. No creed can be divine, therefore, that does not teach man how to meet these ordeals properly.

The sages of ancient and modern times have tried in vain to find a solution for the problem of suffering and death. It is the great mystery of mankind. Jesus Christ solved the problem and cleared away the mystery. He shows us how to face the hardships

of life hopefully. He shows us how to regard the calamities of life serenely. He enables us to meet the sorrows and casualties of life beneficially.

His relation with the world thus becomes a special credential for the divinity of His mission and for the truth of Christianity. We shall now consider this credential in its various aspects. To the real student of life, it speaks as clearly as the Resurrection or any other of the supernatural deeds of the Founder of Christianity.

Christ did not come into the world for Himself, but for mankind. He did not live for Himself, but for us. He came to set the world right. His mission was to establish the proper relation between man and God. Man, misled by the lure of material things, made them the object of his worship and the aim of his existence. Christ came to give mankind the true outlook on life.

His object was to show us the marvelous potentiality of the few years of our earthly career. He pointed out our true destiny, its grandeur, and the way to attain it. After declaring that He was God, and confirming His declaration by doing divine things, He gave His message to the world. That message forms one of the credentials of Christianity.

Jesus Christ alone, of all the persons in the world, gave the solution to the problem of life. This problem has always been concerned with two mysteries, suffering and death. Until Christ's message came

into the world, there was no satisfactory explanation of these human afflictions.

Sages and philosophers had worked on the problem, but with no result. The only conclusion they arrived at was fatalistic. The most they could say to mankind was to bear these evils stoically. Even so they only reached a small following and that for a short time. The majority of mankind was mystified by the existence of suffering and death. They looked upon these afflictions as a necessary evil to be borne because there was no alternative.

Jesus Christ changed all that. This one thing alone would stamp His mission as divine. No one else in the world had ever given a solution that was at once satisfactory and beneficial to mankind and honorable to the Creator. Christ not only gave the solution by word, but He further exemplified it by deed. First He showed by His own life what was the significance of suffering and death, and then He proclaimed it to the world.

Nothing ever had such effect on the world as Christ's teaching in regard to suffering and death. It really transformed man's outlook on life. Now anything that could thus change the current of human thought, not merely for a time but for all time, demands our consideration. By analyzing it, we shall see that it presents us one of the soundest credentials for the truth of Christianity.

Jesus Christ showed the world that suffering and

death are not merely inevitable events in every life, but that they are potentialities of the highest and most lasting good. He showed that these inevitable ordeals of every human career may be converted into incalculable advantage. He justifies the ways of Providence by showing how the adversities of life may become most beneficial to man.

In that way He introduces into life an outlook that will enable even the most unfortunate to face the issues of this mortal career hopefully, serenely and beneficially. And how did Christ do this? In the way that none but a divine authority could do it.

It is all very well to *say* that suffering and death may be beneficial to mankind. Anyone may *say* that. But to say it with authority, to say it in a way that will grip mankind, to say it in such wise that millions will live by it and die for it and exemplify in their lives and deaths the hopefulness and cheerfulness which He inculcates, that is something which not anyone may do, but only He who has divine power and authority.

Christ effected a cheerful outlook among men, no matter what adversities faced them. In the early ages of Christianity, His followers met with greater adversities and hardships than ever afflicted mankind. And they bore themselves so serenely and so buoyantly that their very bearing caused their tormentors to be converted to their faith.

Even the pagans realized that the serenity of

Christians under afflictions was a new and divine thing in the world. Women and children advanced joyfully in the Roman amphitheatre to meet the lions. Although they knew that they were going to be torn to pieces, they went to their laceration cheerfully, chanting hymns. They resembled rather brides going to their nuptials than victims going to slaughter. And, in very truth, they were going to their nuptials with their Bridegroom Christ. That made them happy amidst the physical dread of pain and dissolution.

And their exultation was not fanatical. It was caused by no emotional wave. It was calm, courageous, serene and sublime. For it was their faith in Jesus Christ and His promises that made them strong and hopeful. That went on, not for five or twenty or fifty years, but for three centuries, and in various forms it has gone on ever since, and is going on today, and will go on forever.

Before Christ taught, He lived His teaching. That is what makes it so effective and true. Having joy set before Him, He chose sorrow; having life in His possession, He laid it down of His own accord. He not only deliberately chose to undergo suffering and death, but endured both with a calmness and serenity that evoked from the Roman soldier the exclamation that indeed He was the Son of God.

That Roman soldier was accustomed to suffering and death. He had frequently inflicted both on his

victims. But he never saw anything like the way in which Christ endured. He knew what suffering was in his own case, and how even strong and brave men endure, but he never knew anything like the calm endurance of Jesus Christ.

Jesus, says Scripture, began to do and to teach. He first did what He was afterwards to preach unto others to do. The teachers of the world first teach, and seldom or never do what they teach. Some of the greatest exponents of virtue by speech, were the vilest exponents of it by deed.

Christ, having demonstrated that He was God, saw fit to embrace suffering and death. Then, having exemplified His teaching, having applied it to Himself, He proclaimed it to the world. And from that day to this, every follower of Jesus Christ can face the trials and hardships and calamities and sorrows of life cheerfully. And millions upon millions have so faced them, and so face them today.

What St. Paul said of himself has been repeated by myriads of afflicted ones since:

"But we glory also in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience trial; and trial hope; and hope confoundeth not, because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts"; [1]

"I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come"; [2]

"That which is at present momentary and light of

[1] Rom. 5. 3. [2] Rom. 8. 18.

our tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." [3]

You see that this great Apostle, who willingly endured suffering and death for Jesus Christ, understood that these tribulations were productive. He speaks of them as working out a harvest of happiness in the life beyond. With that outlook on life he, like so many followers of Jesus, rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer for His sake.

Let us see now how Jesus effected this change in the world. As we analyze the matter, we shall observe that His teaching was effective because it was founded on the nature of things. Truth never rests on a false basis. Enduring results cannot come from false principles. It was because Christ was divine and knew the nature of things intimately that He was able to give the solution to the mystery of suffering and death, and in so doing give us a special credential for the divinity of His mission.

Let us analyze suffering and see if we cannot find how it is that Jesus could say with truth: "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." [4] In the light of His assurances, we may understand suffering and death in a way which we could not if He had not spoken.

He has told us that it was necessary for Himself to suffer in order to enter into His glory.[5] He has

[3] II Cor. 4. 17.
[4] John, 16. 20.
[5] Luke, 24. 26.

also declared that they who suffer for justice sake are blessed,[6] that he who loses his life for His sake shall find it,[7] and that our sorrow, no matter what it be, will be turned into joy.[8]

These are His declarations, and they influenced the whole Christian world. They brought hopefulness into millions of doomed and desperate lives. They serve today as the vital principle of millions the world over. By looking into the nature of suffering, we shall see the basis on which Christ rested His teaching on this all important matter.

Even in this life suffering may be beneficial. There is such a thing as productive suffering, as well as barren suffering. The pain suffered by the knitting together of a fracture is productive suffering. It produces something. It results in a sound limb. The pain suffered by lancing a boil is productive. It causes the healing of the diseased parts.

On the other hand, there is such a thing as barren suffering. The pain caused by a cancer is barren, it produces nothing but suffering. It is borne with bad grace, and protestingly, and desperately, that is, of course, if religion is not a factor.

Suffering is like soil. Some soil is barren, other is productive. If you had a square mile of sandy soil in the Sahara Desert and cultivated it for a year, you would produce nothing but toil. But if

[6] Matt. 5. 10.
[7] Luke, 9. 24.
[8] John, 16. 20.

you spent the same efforts on fertile western soil, you would produce crops sufficient to feed a township.

Suppose you were obliged to labor a whole year or a lifetime on the barren sand of Sahara, what a hard, desperate existence it would be. That is suffering which is barren. Christ changed the sand of Sahara into the productive soil of fertile valleys. He took the barren sufferings of mankind, and, by the alchemy of His religion, made it possible for every one of His followers to transform them into productive sufferings.[9]

On the word of God we now have it that the hardships of life may purchase for us an exceeding weight of glory. On God's word we know that the trials of our earthly career can eventuate into the joys of heaven. We know that our earthly warfare may terminate in a glorious victory for eternity.

That is what Christ has done. He has not only taught that,— anyone might so teach,— but He has convinced the millions and millions of His followers all through the ages. Pain is not pain if we know it ends in joy. Death is not death if we know it ends in unending life. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, tells us that our sorrow shall be turned into joy, and that they who live for Him shall not die forever.

It is the *result* of suffering that makes all the dif-

[9] Matt. 5. 10.

ference in the world. If it *results* beneficially, it is cheerfully endured; if it *results* detrimentally, it is desperately borne with. That is what makes the marked difference between a hospital for the incurable and the ordinary hospital.

The patients in a hospital for the incurable may have every comfort and attention possible, but there is an air of depression pervading the place. The patients feel doomed. The only result of their sufferings will be death. Their suffering is barren of beneficial results. In an ordinary hospital, on the contrary, where the patients may suffer more acutely, there is an air of cheerfulness among the sufferers. They realize that their pain is productive. They have the assurance of their physician that their sufferings will result in restored health.

The Great Physician of mankind assures the world on divine authority that sufferings, and even death itself, will result in a blissful and eternal life, if His directions are followed. What a wonderful thing it is for the world to realize that what it dreads most may become the source of its greatest and most lasting happiness. The message of Christ to the world makes mankind feel that the hand which at times rests heavily on them is that of a Father who thereby seeks to bring them more securely home.

The great war we have just passed through teaches us many lessons. The one great lesson it inculcates is that we need an outlook on life such as Christ

gave the world. Life is a very precious thing. Manhood represents years of life. To arrive at man's estate implies the loving care of parents, the continual expenditure of effort, money, and thought, on the growing boy, and finally the boy's own trials and struggles in reaching manhood. A bond of love unites a young man to parents, brothers and sisters and dearly beloved ones.

Yet such a one receives an order to fling himself against a battery of machine guns with all the chances that his young life will terminate in a frightful slaughter. That was the situation that millions had to face. And millions more at home faced it in spirit. The agony and apprehension at the front, and the suspense and affliction at home, made the world at large realize that life which ends with death is mostly a tragedy. And so it is without Christ. But with His assuring message to mankind, what a different aspect life takes on!

A short time ago I was speaking with a young soldier, recently returned from overseas. He had gone over the top twice. I asked him how he felt when the order came to charge from the trenches. He was a good religious young man, and his reply was as follows: "When we got the order, a peculiar feeling crept through my body that resembled fainting. I realized that in a moment or two I might be a corpse. But that was for an instant only. It was followed by a feeling of exaltation, as I real-

ized that I was going to be a victor here or in heaven. I knew I was doing my duty in laying down my life for a just cause, and that made me a sure victor no matter how it ended."

That was the spirit engendered by the promise of Christ: "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it." Whoever sacrifices his life for justice sake is laying down his life for Christ.

Later I met another young man who had been overseas and had gone over the top. He was a Socialist. I put the same question to him. His reply was: "How did I feel? Do you want to know how I felt? I felt just like going into hell." Of course he did not believe in heaven or hell, being a Socialist, but the idea expressed by the word hell conveyed to him the darkest possible outlook.

That was the way he went over the top, desperately. He obeyed orders because he had to. Compulsion can make a man do a great deal. But think of the difference between his outlook and that of the Christian soldier! That is what Christ has done for the world. He has given us the right outlook on life. And the world needs that now, as always.

Christ teaches us to traverse the path of mortality with our gaze fixed on a blessed immortality. He puts sunshine into the darkest life. And so many lives need that. He takes us by the hand and leads us home; for "we have not here a lasting city, but

seek one which is to come." [10] He tells us that in His Father's house there are many mansions, and that He has prepared there a place for us.[11]

That is the outlook Jesus Christ has brought into the world. And it is so helpful because it is true. It has affected the world so strongly because it answers to the cry of nature. It is the Creator's solution, and for that reason it satisfies the creature. It thus becomes for Jesus Christ and His mission a credential that cannot be gainsaid.

We shall consider in the following chapter the results effected in the world by the practical application of this Christian principle. It will be seen that it radically transformed the world. To some minds, the credentials supplied by the facts enumerated in the next chapter will prove to be the strongest guarantee for the truth of Christianity.

Taken in conjunction with what we have already advanced, it will afford fair and intelligent minds as solid reasons for the acceptance of Christianity as were ever presented in behalf of any project. Christianity requires only a dispassionate hearing in order to be accepted. With a judicial attitude, therefore, kindly weigh well the effect of Christ's teaching in the world.

[10] Heb. 13. 14. [11] John, 14. 2.

CHAPTER X

THE WORLD AFTER CHRIST

NOTHING tests truth like time, for time shows consequences. Consequences are facts and facts are stubborn things. One fact may offset a hundred argumentations. We are now going to appeal to facts as a credential of Christianity. Not that Christianity does not bear its own inherent credentials of truth, but the facts which we shall adduce will bring out that truth more prominently.

We propose to show that Christianity encountered a condition of evil in the world which was beyond remedy by human power, and that it remedied the evil. We shall show that wherever Christianity became established, it transformed mankind.

The chief blots on civilization before the Christian era were idolatry, impurity, debasement of women, infanticide, cruelty to the unfortunate, slavery, and the torture and butchery of prisoners of war. These vices and deformities of society were general, even in the best period of Roman civilization. Observe, now, how the benign influence of Christianity eradicated or ameliorated these dreadful elements of paganism.

In demonstrating the changes effected by Christianity, the conditions which confronted the religion of Christ in its origin, and which are mentioned in the first chapter are here presented again, but from a different standpoint and for another purpose.

A mere reference to those conditions would perhaps now suffice, but in order to show effectively the wonderful achievements of Christianity, the deadly vices of pagan civilization are brought in contrast with the Christian virtues which supplanted them.

At the birth of Christianity, every people of the world, except the Jews, worshipped idols. Forms fashioned by their own hands became the objects of adoration in the real sense, that is, these idols were either adored as living, powerful beings, capable of themselves of helping or hurting mankind, or divine honors were paid to creatures represented by them.

The former were not mere representations, such as the Christian religion employs to help us fix the mind on supernatural things, or as photographs or statues which serve to recall absent ones, but they were regarded as powerful beings in themselves. They were adored for themselves, without any reference to a separate being apart whom they merely recalled or represented. Before these hand-made deities they bowed down in adoration, celebrated elaborate rites, and frequently sacrificed living beings, and sometimes even human life.

And it must not be thought that only the ignorant

or common people so worshipped. Those in every station of life, from the rulers down to the very slaves, engaged in this hideous worship. The other form of idolatry, by which human beings and other living creatures were adored by means of statues and other symbols, was common even among the most civilized nations before the advent of Christ.

The Roman emperor was the Pontifex Maximus, the supreme High Priest of idolatry. The Roman senators worshipped as well as the Roman generals and soldiers. The best families of Rome gave their daughters as Vestal Virgins to this idolatrous service in the temples. This was at Rome, the centre of civilization. In other parts of the Empire, the worship was just as general and infinitely more degrading. Even the Roman emperors were deified and had statues and temples erected to their worship.

It is hard to believe that the wise Romans and the cultured Greeks could fall so low, but it shows what human culture at its best is capable of, and it points to the need of help from above, if mankind is to live aright. Christianity gave that help. Today nowhere in the world where Christianity reigns does idolatry exist, and Christianity now dominates most of the world.

Impurity was another hideous disease of pagan society at the time of Christ. It was a foul and

public vice. It formed part of the rites of idol worship. There was no shame about it. The most distinguished and honored men of the Empire glorified their lust. Gods and goddesses were fashioned by voluptuous hands and then worshipped by unmentionable deeds of lust. And that in the open.

All this is too well known to need proof or insistence. Pagan society was vile through and through. Man had fallen as low as the beasts. He had shown how truly his nature was corrupt and how very much he stood in need of restoration.

Christianity was the restorer. Today, nowhere in the world may vice raise its head. Vice there is, alas, too much of it, for many refuse the restoration, but nowhere in the Christian world is there open vice. Nowhere in the world may a man look for the respect of his fellow man if he is openly immoral. Decency rules everywhere, except in hidden places, or in the degenerate circles of certain social sets. But even these must put on the appearance of virtue, so strong is the standard of decency upheld by Christianity.

But the great crying evil of pagan civilization was its treatment of woman. The debasement of women was the root of idolatry and immorality. Woman had fallen or had been forced into the position of a mere creature of gratification for the lust of man. The most refined pagan nations looked upon their

women as they did upon their lands, their cattle and their possessions. They regarded them as their ornaments or the means of their enjoyment.

No people can ever rise above the level of its womanhood. The wife and the mother are the very foundations of the social structure. If these foundations are despicable, the whole social edifice will be corrupt. And it was that way with pagan civilization at its highest.

Never was pagan civilization higher than in the Augustan Age, never was woman viler. Society had to be regenerated from its very foundation. No human power could do it. Human effort had done its utmost, with the result that woman was never so low. But Christianity has changed all that. Christianity accomplished the humanly impossible.

Today throughout the civilized world woman is in honor. As mother and as wife she is the most respected being on earth. No man dares offer open insult to her throughout the confines of civilization. As companion of man, not his toy, she is queen of the home and the inspiration of all that is best in him. She is at the very pinnacle of respect, who before was at the very depth of degradation.

And what did it? Christianity. For Christ chose as His way of entrance into the world not a new creation, not some angelic device, but a woman, a virgin, the pure Maid of Nazareth. Her He made His mother, from her He drew His human nature,

and it was the blood He received from her veins that He shed on Calvary for our redemption.

That elevated woman. The respect which Christians had for Christ's mother passed to women generally. If the women of today hold the lofty station that is theirs throughout the world, it is Christianity they must thank for it.

Before the coming of Christ, infanticide was widespread. Heathen morality saw no wrong in a father's wilful murder of his own child. The great Aristotle, who represented in himself the highest pagan thought and civilization, lays down the rules under which infanticide should be practised.[1] In Rome, the imperial laws sanctioned the act by which a father exposed his child to die of cold or hunger. The pagans ruthlessly strangled, starved or slew a child that was not well favored or that seemed to be in the way.

It is hard for us nowadays, with our great respect for life, to realize how civilized society tolerated such customs and crimes. But our point of view is Christian. On this matter, as on a thousand others, our sentiments are based on the elevated morality introduced into the world by Jesus Christ. A condition of affairs which seems to us very frightful was to the pagans quite proper. We are so accustomed to the benefits of Christianity that we fail to appreciate their magnitude.

1 Politics, 7. 16.

In no civilized country of the world is infanticide now lawful. That is the fruit of Christianity. Indeed, so sacred has Jesus Christ made life that even the unborn child is protected. Christianity forbids the taking of life, not only after the child has seen the light of day, but also during its period of development in the darkness of the maternal womb.

One of the reasons why Christianity is assailed is just because of its strict safeguarding of life. Mothers who would avoid the duties of maternity, and fathers who would reduce marriage to the level of lust, regard Christianity as an enemy. Of course voluptuaries will never give the real reason of their hostility to Christ and His religion, but cloak it under the name of intellectual freedom and advanced science.

But the most independent minds of the ages and the best scientists have bowed down before Christ and His religion. The whole world would be Christian if Christianity permitted each one to legislate for himself. But in that case, the fruits of Christianity would be nil, rather, there would be universal license.

That there may be order in an army, there must be rules and regulations which restrain individual liberty. Otherwise, it would be a mob instead of an army. In the world at large, unless religion asserts itself over the ways and doings of mankind, it may just as well cease to be.

The wonderful thing about Christianity is that it

showed such credentials for its truth that it brought the whole Roman Empire under its authority, and now the influence of its teaching is felt throughout the world. Even non-Christian nations like Japan have acquired all that is most admirable in them from the study of Christian nations and the adoption of Christian policies.

It was the personality and teaching of Christ that effected such a radical change throughout the world. No other person, no matter what his wisdom or power, ever got a following in vital matters outside his own people, and that only for a time. Christ, after twenty centuries, has a following all over the world, from every nation, and His law is the practical guidance of their lives.

This will appear even more strikingly when we consider how He transformed the world in regard to philanthropy. Before His coming, it was indeed the survival of the fittest. There was no room for the weak, the helpless and the unfortunate. No government made any provision for the poor. There was no such thing as a hospital or a home for the aged and infirm, or an asylum for orphans, or a refuge for the unfortunate. Pagan annals will be searched in vain for anything of this character.

We are so accustomed to these beneficial institutions that we find it hard to realize that they did not always exist. It is another instance of what Christianity has done for the world, and the world knows

it not. Like Christ Himself who came unto His own and they rejected Him, so Christianity, which has conferred on the world all that is best in it, is frequently vilified and assailed by the world. The ingratitude of mankind was not exhausted by the Crucifixion.

In denouncing Christianity, people are doing so for one of two reasons,— either because they know only a caricature of it, or because they are opposed to its lofty morality, thereby confessing their own low standards.

When we consider all the charity that there is in the world today, and realize that it is all the outcome of Christian teaching, we should reverence its holy Founder and His religion. It was the words of Christ, that anyone who gave a cup of cold water to another for His sake should not lose His reward,[2] and that what was done to one of His least brethren was done to Him,[3] that radically changed the attitude of man to his fellow man.

When Jesus proclaimed that all men were brethren, the children of their Father in heaven, He not only taught the most unheard of doctrine ever announced, but also laid the foundations of that marvelous charity which constitutes the glory of Christian civilization. Do we think of this when we hear Christianity derided?

In pagan times, there was no feeding of enemy

[2] Matt. 10. 42. [3] Matt. 25. 40.

nations, no caring for enemy prisoners. In those ages it was *Vae victis!* Woe to the conquered! The Roman law was that a victorious general could either slay his prisoners or make them slaves.[4] Those he could not use for work or lust, he often butchered, men, women and children. Prisoners of war are now so well protected that frequently their lot is much better than that of their comrades in arms.

What is that but the practical application of the Sermon on the Mount! Philosophers and sages and scholars declare that the sublimest discourse ever uttered in this world was that Sermon on the Mount. It was the personality of Jesus that made it sublime.

If He preached forgiveness of injuries and kindness, not only to friends but to enemies, He also practised both in the highest degree. He was not an academic lecturer, enthusing over lofty themes in the abstract, but He was a teacher who exemplified all that He taught. He was the only person in the world who could point to Himself and say: "Learn of me," [5] "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life," [6] "He who follows after me walketh not in darkness." [7] Only a divine person could use such language as that and get a response to it.

In proof of which, I wish to refer to another effect

[4] Justinian, Inst. 1. 3. 3.
[5] Matt. 11. 29.
[6] John, 14. 6.
[7] John, 8. 12.

in the world brought about by Christianity, namely the gradual abolition of slavery.

"If Christ had not appeared upon earth, I do not know how the world could have resisted the despotism which was stifling it. I do not speak here as a Christian, but as a historian. In this character I affirm that in politics, as well as in morals and philosophy, the Gospel gave new life to men. We have reason to date our years from the birth of Christ, for a new society sprang from the Gospel." [8]

The average working man in pre-Christian times was a slave. At Rome, one citizen owned a thousand slaves, another ten thousand, another twenty thousand. One hundred and twenty million slaves were the property of six million freemen. The slaves of Rome were so numerous that the Senate forbade their wearing a distinct dress for fear that, realizing their numbers, they would rise in revolt.

The law required that if a master was killed by one of his slaves, every one of them should be put to death, and it is known that as many as three hundred slaves were killed on account of the crime of one. The condition of the slaves was so bad that frequently they took their own lives. The supreme pleasure of the Roman people was to witness spectacles wherein men fought unto death with men. These gladiators were mostly slaves.

[8] Laboulaye, "L'Etat et ses limites."

Today there is no slavery in any civilized nation. Christianity brought that about.

We nowadays are inclined to think that slavery was an institution which afflicted only the poor blacks of Africa and other such peoples. But in Greece and Rome the slaves were often more cultured than their masters. The chance of war made the most delicate and refined the slaves of the victors.

Slavery in modern times was due to the cupidity of adventurous men who raided Africa in this traffic in human beings. The very fact that these pirates had to go to the ends of the earth to carry on their inhuman business shows how slavery was stamped out of civilization by Christianity. In order to get a market for their slaves, these unchristian men of a Christian era were obliged to resort to the colonies of the New World. But even here, the Christian spirit of the people eventually stamped out the evil. It was the spirit of Christianity asserting itself anew.

The first real emancipation of slavery was the liberation of Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, at the request of St. Paul, who begged the master to free this slave for the love of Jesus Christ, and to treat him "not now as a servant, but instead a most dear brother." [9] Christ had said: "As long as you did it to the least of my brethren, you did it to me." [10] It was that spirit of Jesus permeating man-

[9] Philem. 1. 16. [10] Matt. 25. 40.

kind that led to the gradual extinction of slavery.

We can hardly realize now what a fundamental change Christ effected in the world. We are accustomed to the Christian standards of life and do not advert to the wonderful benefits we enjoy. Do you ever reflect that in the days of the glory of Greece and Rome the prisoners taken in war were made slaves! Men and women, often more refined than their conquerors, were reduced to absolute slavery in many lands.

Suppose in this great World War your boys who were taken by the enemy were held forever! Suppose you could never see them again or hear from them. And suppose that your only thoughts of them would be that they were the slaves of an enemy that despised you and them! If your boys have been spared that fate, it is due to Christianity. Does not that bring home to you what Christianity is?

Do not fancy that culture and progress could effect that change. Greece and Rome surpassed us in human culture. No, it was not culture nor progress, but the power of God in Christianity, that has effected this and the other radical reforms in the world. It was the teaching of Christ, the example of Christ, the personality of Christ, that accomplished what no human power could do.

Christ thus becomes His own credential. He stands forth the supreme world figure. His personality alone entitles Him to credence. Everything

that He said and did and was, proclaims Him divine. As divine, He Himself, His mission and the establishment of Christianity, are intelligible. Not divine, He Himself, His mission and the establishment of Christianity, are a greater mystery than any His religion proposes.

We have now presented the religion of Jesus Christ and its credentials to the jury of our readers.

Before concluding this chapter on the marvelous results brought about by Christianity, I wish to say that the world is by no means perfect now. Many evils exist. But the great, crying, irremediable evils of pre-Christian ages have disappeared, or cease to exist as social institutions. Idolatry, open impurity, the debasement of women, infanticide, maltreatment of the aged and infirm, slavery and the fate of prisoners of war, all these exist no longer.

That is a list of reforms effected by Christianity, and is of itself sufficient to stamp it as divine. If any one of these evils existed today, the whole community would rise up in alarm and protest. Yet, in the days before Christ, no one was shocked by such things and no one saw any remedy for them. And there was no remedy, except from above. Christianity actually remedied these curses of pagan civilization and converted them into the blessings of modern Christian civilization.

The selfishness and lust of mankind still cause untold misery in the world. But this is not because of

Christian principles, but in spite of them. Whenever or wherever you find wrong-doing, you will also find that the principles of Christianity have been ignored or set aside. Christ was the Light of the world, "and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."[11] Christianity likewise is the Light of the world, but the world frequently prefers darkness for its dark deeds and closes out the light. But that is not the fault of the light, but of those who wilfully blind themselves.

Unto those who love the light and the truth, the great changes wrought in the world by Christianity are the soundest credential for its truth. No human institution can parallel or approach the transformation it effected. By its record, therefore, it shows divine.

[11] John, 1. 5.

CHAPTER XI

CHRISTIANITY AND MEN OF GENIUS

IF a bank or a corporation of any kind wishes to obtain the confidence and support of the public, it endeavors to enroll on its list of directors men of high standing in the community. The very fact that persons of exceptional integrity and business acumen are associated with a concern is a splendid recommendation for it. I intend to show that the religion of Jesus Christ has as its adherents and supporters the greatest geniuses of mankind from the very beginning of Christianity.

There are many people who do not do their own thinking. In fact, most people do not. And yet in a subtle way, they do think. Frequently they think more logically than professed thinkers. They draw a rational conclusion without going through the intricacies of reasoning. If they observe that a man who is in every way their superior, and who has facilities for investigation which they have not, and if his conclusion accords with common sense, they judge that they are not far wrong in following him.

We see this in military matters, where the common soldier leaves the thinking to his commanding officer. Of course in military affairs such subordi-

nation is obligatory. But in other affairs of life, observe how the generality of men form their judgment althogether on the opinion of experts.

In the stock market, thousands would risk all their capital on a tip from one of the great leaders of finance. Andrew Carnegie relates that he got his start in life by such a tip from a friend in the financial world. He put such faith in the judgment of his adviser that he mortgaged his humble home to raise $250 for his first investment. Carnegie was by no means a man incapable of figuring out things for himself, but he realized that the other man was altogether superior to him at the time. So, without knowing the ins and outs of the matter, he used common sense and took a short cut to a true conclusion by recognizing that the judgment of a superior man was better than his own.

And most people do that. That is why an enterprise likes to have a good array of names associated with it. But all this is too commonplace to need more than a mere reference. I have referred to it in order to bespeak a similar attitude towards the great geniuses of the world who have given their adherence to Christianity.

Some opponents of Christianity point with pride to latter day infidel and rationalistic thinkers, and proclaim that these great men are proof that Christianity cannot stand the searching light of modern scientific investigation. Indeed! I intend, there-

fore, to show that nearly every man of genius for the past two thousand years has been a Christian.

When I say a man of genius, I do not mean a man who has made a lot of money, or a man who has accidentally discovered something new in the material world, or one who has broached some strange theory which stultifies all mankind who preceded him. A genius for money or novelty may be a monomaniac.

Some great business men and some notable inventors have never given their minds to anything but the matter directly before them. They know as little about the problems which have engaged the world of thought as a gunner knows about the manufacture of steel. To quote them, therefore, as superior men who have rejected Christianity is like quoting an aviation ace on astronomy. For the most part, they know nothing at all about Christianity, and what they do know is usually false. Their very prominence in worldly affairs is frequently due to the fact that they devoted all their time and thought to the one thing which is their specialty.

I know, of course, that there are many captains of industry, and many inventors, who are conversant with the religious thought of the day, but their judgment has value, not so much in matters religious, as in affairs of business or mechanics. Because a man is a great architect, you would not engage him as a physician.

So, in the realm of thought, when we consider the minds which command respect, we must look to the geniuses in the world of ideas. And among men of ideas, we must consider those whose work has built up and advanced human culture and welfare, rather than the freaks who, from century to century, like meteors have shot across the intellectual firmament, only to burn themselves out by their own absurdity. Innumerable are the freak thinkers who have given nothing to the world but an intellectual shock. During their brief day, or night, they seem to be new luminaries, but when the novelty of it is over, they are not found in the firmament of thinkers.

Now if we look at the really substantial men of thought, we shall find that they have given their firm allegiance to Christianity. Presently I shall enumerate the great scholars of the world, and we shall see where they stand. I shall also be very frank and give alongside the notable men who are opposed to Christianity. You will notice this difference between the names on the Christian and anti-Christian lists, namely that the Christian men, for the most part, are recognized geniuses, whose place in history is like that of the fixed stars in the firmament. The anti-Christians are men who have attained a following here or there, and for a time.

A few, like Kant, linger on and die slowly, but no one expects them to last, except their ardent fol-

lowers. After all, Kant is dead only a century, and he is the greatest on the list, yet his system has plunged the world into such disorder that it will take centuries of sound thought to undo his work. But it will be undone. New intellectual maladies may come, but this will go.

As Kant is the standard-bearer and chief luminary of the anti-Christian forces, the man who is the intellectual basis of modern irreligion, I shall briefly touch on a few things which will show a logical man that he and his system are discredited. I pass over the consequences of his system on mankind, which alone demonstrate its falseness, for the truth never runs counter to the real progress and welfare of the human race.

I know it is a bold thing to attempt by a stroke to overturn an idol like Kant. But frequently a child has clearer vision than his elders simply because he sees what he sees, and not what he thinks he sees. Kant and his class get a following because of the intellectual haze that surrounds them. Some people imagine they are thinkers if they adhere to a master who is incomprehensible. In proportion as they cannot understand him, they flatter themselves that they belong to an intellectual movement.

There are others who follow anyone who sets himself up against the past. And besides, there is a multitude which gladly follows the leader who pro-

claims that his followers are emancipated from the obligations which have hitherto bound the human race. A guide who has to grope his way and to return and start over again is not a true guide. A wayfarer can do that himself without a guide.

Now Kant is that kind of an intellectual guide, and for that simple reason he is discredited. This is not merely my own assertion. It is the judgment of men who stand high in the world of modern thinkers. Schopenhauer, an ardent admirer of Kant, says that in the second edition of the "Critique of Pure Reason," the Kantian bible, the author changed it into a "self-contradictory and mutilated work." The elder Jacobi, Michelet, and others, were of the same opinion.[1] Now truth never changes. No matter what halo of obscurity Kant surrounds himself with, he shows false under scrutiny.

On some of the disciples of Kant, the same Schopenhauer thus comments: "The lowest stage of degradation was reached by Hegel, . . . who turned philosophy into an instrument of obscurantism . . . and drew over her a veil of the emptiest verbiage and the most senseless hodge-podge ever heard out of Bedlam."[2] Professor Ferrier confirms the judgment of Schopenhauer by the following drastic statement: "Who has ever yet uttered one intelligible

[1] "Critique of Pure Reason," translator's Preface, pp. XI, XIV. Mr. Meiklejohn.

[2] "Logic of Hegel," Wallace, *Dublin Review*, July, 1894, p. 224.

word about Hegel? Not one of his countryman, not any foreigner, seldom even himself." [3]

Kant, Hegel & Co., are all dwellers in the Realm of Shadows, the title which Hegel gives to his own system.[4] Sydney Smith, a man of keen intellectual perception, was unable to penetrate this land of shadows.[5] He felt like a man lost in a forest when he was among these would-be guides.

I could go on indefinitely to substantiate the haziness and uncertainty of these men and their followers, who pose as the light of the intellectual world. But much proof is not needed when they and their followers, instead of illuminating the path of mankind, obscure it. This is not a philosophic or analytic treatise, but just a common sense view of a matter which is a mystery to many. People nowadays often wonder why some of the famous scholars of the period are anti-Christian. They are so because they follow leaders like Kant and Hegel, who could not even guide themselves. And they follow such leaders because it is an intellectual fad.

Pascal says that a great writer is one who presents lofty things so clearly that they seem simple to inferior minds. Judged by this standard, most of the masters of the modern school of thought need masters themselves. I hope I am not arbitrary in saying

[3] "Secret of Hegel," Stirling, Vol. I, p. XXIV.
[4] *Dub. Rev.*, July, 1894.
[5] "Moral Philosophy," p. 54. Longmans, 1850.

this. I do not mean to be. I do not set myself against an intellectual trend, but against an intellectual twist.

Hear what Edmund Burke has to say on the subject: "Certain compositions are admired by credulous ignorance for no other reason than because they were not understood, the generality being content to admire because it is the fashion to admire. If the work under these circumstances be pompous and unmeaning, its success is sure, as its pomp dazzles and its vacancy puzzles, both which are admirable ingredients to procure respect." [6]

Mr. Sterling, an admirer of the philosophy of which Kant and Hegel are the princes, writes: "We possess writers of the highest ability in themselves, and of the most consummate accomplishment as to all learning requisite,— Sir William Hamilton, Coleridge, De Quincy, for example,— who have instituted each of them his own special inquest into the matter, and who all agree in assuring us of the self-contradictory, and indeed, nugatory, nature of the entire industry, from Kant who began it, to Hegel and Schelling who finished it." [7]

It is because few have taken the trouble to analyze this modern opponent of Christianity that he still has a following. It has been said that only children and barbarians take people at their own valuation.

[6] Prior's "Life of Burke," 1, 430.

[7] "Secret of Hegel," I, Pref. p. XX, Stirling.

These prophets of free thought dogmatize and pose as if they were infallible and omnipotent, and because they proclaim a gospel which flatters man's pride and passions, they get a following. But if we follow Kant & Co., we must say farewell not only to common sense, but to the great masters of thought throughout the ages. If we take Kant as a guide, we must abandon Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Bacon, Pascal, Newton, Leibnitz, Burke, Cuvier and Pasteur.

"You change, therefore you are not true," was the dictum of Bossuet, which his opponents could never answer. Kant and Fichte and Hegel changed. The truth has never changed. If a witness changes his statement in a court of law, his testimony does not count. That is why Christianity cannot change. If it should, it would not be entitled to credence. "Rationalists," says Lord Bacon, "are like spiders; they spin all out of their own bowels. But give me a philosopher who, like the bee, hath a middle faculty, gathering from abroad, but digesting that which is gathered by his own virtue." [8]

Some people think that the world will have to come to terms with this new Culture of the Kantian school. But it is this Culture itself which will have to come to terms with reason. Like a boomerang, it is coming back on itself by the consequences of its own false principles. The absolutism which it gen-

[8] "Essays," Chandos ed., p. 386.

erated, instead of setting men free, has enthralled them. It pretends to liberate man from any higher law than himself, whereas in point of fact it forges a chain for his enslavement.

Mankind must follow the law of the Gospel or the law of nature. There is no alternative. As nature is ordinarily influenced by passion, it has never yet been a safe guide. Witness the excesses beginning with Voltaire and by no means yet ended. In throwing off the yoke of God, man places on himself an unbearable weight. Never in the history of the world was mankind so rudely dealt with as in these days of materialistic domination.

Bearing in mind, therefore, the difference between the fixed stars of the firmament and the flashing meteors of the sky, study this list of names of men who believed in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and of those who did not. You will observe that the believers in Christianity were geniuses of the highest order, men for the most part whose efforts resulted in the substantial progress and happiness of mankind.

A thousand years from now their names will be as bright as they are today. They are fixed stars in the intellectual firmament. The others, on the contrary, have contributed little of positive value to the happiness of the world. Like meteors, they have attracted passing attention.

In this list of Christian believers, I give no

churchmen. Moreover, I pass over the galaxy of geniuses which dazzled early Christianity, Justin, Origen, Tertullian, Augustine, and a host of others, the like of whom the world may never see again, and all of whom were pagans before they became Christians, thus showing that their belief was not inherited, but the result of the investigation of genius. I pass over the great theologians of the wonderful Middle Ages, that period which is only now beginning to be appreciated as the brightest era of human welfare. I only mention in passing Thomas Aquinas, considered by the learned world the greatest genius of all time.

Are you influenced by names, talent, renown? If so, there is no undertaking in this world so richly endowed with distinguished names as Christianity. Every man on the Christian list was a genius. Every one of them was constructive. Every one of them believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

I am not presenting all these men as ideals of Christian virtue. Some of them had strong passions and overstepped the lines of Christian morality, but they recognized that they were delinquent and regretted it. They did not glorify vice, as did some on the list of unbelief. Voltaire, who is the high-priest of infidelity, openly laughed at virtue, and led a life akin to that of swine. He lived in mud and died in it. Following passion as a guide, he became its victim, as all do.

In this list I give no name of a person who was living at the beginning of the twentieth century. We are in no position to judge the men of our day. Pasteur and Huxley, the last named on each list, died in the year 1895.

Christians		*Unbelievers*	
Dante	No unbelievers among the writers of the civilized nations of Europe during this period: 1265–1650.	Spinosa	Spinosa, a Jewish philosopher, may be considered the father of modern unbelief.
Petrarch		Voltaire	
Chaucer		Rousseau	
Erasmus		Hume	
Ariosto		Kant	
Sir Thos. More		Gibbon	
Copernicus		Goethe	
Columbus		Hegel	
Spenser		Tyndall	
Cervantes		Huxley	
Shakespeare			
Bacon			
Galileo			
Kepler			
Harvey			
Descartes			
Milton			
Pascal			
Locke			
Newton			
Leibnitz			
Swift			
Johnson			
Burke			
Napoleon			
Cuvier			
Pasteur			

There are only two standards of morality for mankind, the Gospel or nature. We must accept one or

the other. As Christ said, "he who is not with me, is against me." Nature, as we know, is inclined to evil. Every man knows that his passions, if given rein, will ruin him. Man's will is weak in the presence of certain temptations. What tempts one may not tempt another. But each one of us has some dominant passion. Unless that is controlled, it will run away with the best of us.

The instinct of nature guides an animal aright. But man has reason instead of instinct to guide him. Reason, if listened to, will lead man properly, but the trouble is that ordinarily it is not listened to. The call of passion is frequently so loud that conscience, which is reason's voice, is too often not heard.

Nature, if man does his full part, will bring him to the accomplishment of his purpose in life. But it is because man rarely does his full part that nature unassisted from above does not suffice. Not that the Creator has made us defective. In giving us reason, He gives us the means of realizing our need of Himself and His help, and if we do our part, He will make the weakest of us stronger than the strongest who stands alone.

Look at the noble examples in history of weak women and children who have risen to the loftiest heights of virtue by the Gospel. See the host of men (like ourselves), of strong passions, who have

regulated their lives by the Gospel, and thereby have become better and made the world better.

Nowadays it is the fashion in some quarters to say that Christianity is worn out. That has been said every century for the past twenty, but I challenge any man to show in the world today a more vital institution than Christianity.

Oh, yes, I know that some governments and some peoples have turned against Christ and His Gospel. That is an old story. It began twenty centuries ago. It began with Christ Himself. His own people rejected Him. The Roman Empire persecuted Him. The Arians divided Him. But He is in the world today, and has more true subjects than any sovereign that ever reigned. More serve Him out of love than ever served human lord or ruler out of love or fear.

Pilate condemned Jesus after adjudging Him not guilty. He went to death amidst the howls of a mob, many of whom He had healed of their ailments, and all of whom He had uplifted by His words of wisdom and love. But men hostile to His sublime teaching went among the people and proved that propaganda was as effective then as now. They who before had acclaimed Him the Messiah, now clamored for His crucifixion.

That is the way of the world,— benefits forgot. All the good, the real good, that is in the world today is the result of Christianity. And this is the world that now turns against God and His Christ.

But Christ foretold it. This very rejection, therefore, proves His mission.

It occurs at once to inquire why should Christ and His religion be at the mercy of the world. Why does He not assert Himself? He does, unto them that do their part. But to those who are sufficient for themselves, spite of the fact that sad experience shows how insufficient they are for themselves, He stands as He stood before Herod, silent. But to Magdalen and to Peter and to the Thief on the cross, He showed Himself very God.

And today throughout our land He thus shows Himself to millions. If modern Herods now scoff at Him, and the world ridicules Him, the hearts of hundreds of millions revere Him as King and adore Him as God. Unto the end the struggle will go on between Christ and the world. It is the great mystery.

Why does God allow Christianity to be thus assailed? Why did He allow Christ Himself to be scorned? He respects our free will, that is the answer. He endowed us with liberty, and He will not take back His endowment. If there were no choice between good and evil, there would be no human liberty, for free will supposes choice. But God does all in His power, short of interfering with our free will, to win us over to good. And that because it is for our own good. But man must use his reason and exert himself. Most men know next to

nothing about the Christian credentials. They have time for this project and that, but no time at all for the greatest thing of all time.

Christianity is not a theory. It is a two thousand year old fact. Many people study that fact, if they study it at all, through the minds of those hostile to Christianity. The present generation is intoxicated with material ideas and values. The spiritual is crowded out.

But was there ever greater misery in the world than today! The worship of material splendor and force has plunged mankind into an abyss of discontent, selfishness, cruelty and injustice. With all our boasted progress, were there ever more suicides? With life giving so much, there are so many, and those who have most, who find it not worth the living.

As Augustine has said, the heart is empty unless it holds Him who made it. And St. Paul reminds us that "We have not here a lasting city, but seek one which is to come." [9] When that is realized, life will have a meaning. That is the Gospel message. That is Christianity. To as many as receive Him, Christ gives the power to become the children of God. That is the life of Faith.

And millions are living that life. Christianity is not worn out or dead. It is the one thing in the world today that can set it right. But, as in the

[9] Heb. 13. 14.

time of Christ Himself, man must do his part. The same Christianity is abroad today that made the Middle Ages (so much abused by enemy historians) the envy of all time. It can do the same for this generation, so surfeited with pride and luxury, but so empty of all that makes for content.

If the scholars of today, who boast of their scientific methods, would go to the sources rather than to the poisoned streams of history, they would become champions of Christianity rather than its assailants. Men who are sufficiently learned to pass judgment on a religion which has the adherence of so many men of genius, are learned enough to go to the right sources of information. How many do?

Many do not play the game fair. They act like a judge who gets all the testimony in a case from one side. I ask you who read these lines, have you gone to Christian authorities for your estimate, or have you based your opinion on a magazine article or on hearsay evidence or on some local misrepresentative of Christianity? Or have you obtained your views from a direct antagonist of the supernatural? If so, it is not fair. You would not do that in ordinary matters, and this is more than ordinary.

The Christianity of Christ was assailed in His own day. The Christianity of Christ was a minority in His own day. The Christianity of Christ was opposed by the learned and the powerful of the Roman world. But the Christianity of Christ took that de-

cadent world and moulded it into Christian civilization.

It will renew the world today, unless the pride and passion of man refuse their cooperation. But if Christianity does not take a hand in the work, that work will fail, as the world today has failed, spite of the materialistic efforts of those false leaders of thought who based their systems on human sufficiency alone, to the rejection of all help from the Maker and Ruler of the world.

If you are ill and call in a physician, and then reject his prescription, you cannot blame him for your condition. Christ, the great Physician, prescribed once for all for mankind. He cannot be set aside without detriment to the world.

Social justice and contentment are the very foundations of public welfare. There is no force in the world so capable of producing these essential elements as Christianity. This is not an assertion, but the verdict of history. From the turmoil of barbaric invasion into which Europe was thrown by Hun and Goth and Vandal, Christianity fashioned the nations of modern Europe. That was a greater task than confronts her now. She rode that storm as she will ride this. Our fears are not for Christianity, but for the world without Christianity.

CHAPTER XII

THE WORLD RESTORER

JUDGING from the trend of the articles which now appear in serious reviews and books, it is evident that the world is dissatisfied with itself. And it should be. As a man sows, so shall he reap. No investment pays so poorly as selfishness. Rather, it bankrupts. Individual and corporate selfishness has been the especial characteristic of the world during the past few centuries. And this, notwithstanding our philanthropists and our instrumentalities of benevolence. In fact, the field for philanthropy and benevolence is so large because of the prevailing selfishness.

What has created the multitude of beneficiaries throughout the civilized world but the injustice of those in power and the selfishness of those who possess a superabundance. It was not always so. In former days there was less production and poorer facilities for transportation,— and less distress. Now, when the world is at the peak of production, misery is at its maximum. Millions are barely existing. I do not speak of devastated Europe, but of plentiful America. And while the multitude is

scantily fed and clothed, our millionaires are multiplying, multiplying on misery, multiplying on patriotism. And the patriots, the men who risked life and limb, are now fighting for the very maintenance of the life they risked so patriotically. I am no radical. Even these facts I should not put into print were they not on everyone's lips. A physician must at times give a disagreeable diagnosis, but for the good of the patient and the patient's friends.

If selfishness is the characteristic of power, why should it not be the trait of those under? It is, but those under are helpless. But suppose they become strong, as strong as those on top? And they have, and they know it, and now the struggle is on between those in possession and those without possessions. Writers call it unrest. It may be the unrest of a volcano. It all depends. Now what caused it all, and what is the remedy? For it is useless to point out a sore on the body politic unless to heal it. Such a sore was on the Roman Empire when it went under. We are not stronger. As now, so then, the people were pacified for a time by food and shows, but the sore ate into the body, and the strongest Ruler of the world became a corpse, a prey to the vultures of the North. And the cause? The same,— selfishness.

Selfishness is the cult of mankind unless man looks beyond. It is so natural. Why should a man not get all and enjoy all he can if he does not look be-

yond? Rationalistic moralists may be shocked at this. They may declare that decency, uprightness, fairness, dictate to a man moderation and consideration. It is one thing to dictate, another to follow the dictation. We know, we know from experience, that human nature jumps over the traces. We know that, although a few men here and there are a firm law of rectitude to themselves, most men follow passion instead of rectitude. We have got to take man as he is, not as we would have him. And face to face with ourselves, do not the best of us at times feel very much ashamed of ourselves? So we must have something to help us to be better than our poor selves. Something to make us less selfish. That is the key to right living to social justice and content. Christianity gives that key.

And that is why religion is necessary. And if you wish to know why the world is now in unrest, it is because the world is irreligious. Religion of some kind is necessary to make man do his part in the world. For self-interest is so powerful that unless it is directed from above, it will lead man to gratify his passions spite of human considerations. We see this every day. Of course I understand that you can point to this man and that as examples of those who have no religion, and who are good to their friends and their families and just in their dealings with others. But do you realize that certain men find more satisfaction in acting thus than in doing other-

wise? It is a form of selfishness,— a good form, I admit. A man may love a reputation as much as he loves himself. A man may be kind to others because it is easier for him than to be unkind. What does all this mean but that a man is fortunate whose disposition is to do and be good. But all men are not that way. And those who are, may meet a temptation of a new kind any day which will rouse new sentiments and create forbidden attractions. What then? Unless a man looks beyond, he is gone. And what is to make him look beyond except religion? Christianity teaches us how to live right. It puts justice and charity first. Welfare beyond depends on virtue here.

I have put the case for natural virtue most favorably. All men are not the fine specimens supposed above. Moreover, many of those thus favored owe it, in great part, to the Christian environment in which they have been reared. The generality of mankind craves what it has not got and what it cannot get. What is to remedy this craving? What is the prescription for this fever? Christ, the great Physician of the world, prescribed for mankind once for all. It is His Gospel that can calm the fevered brow of mankind and give contentment to the world. For He tells us that we are but wayfarers, our home is not here but beyond, life is but the first stage of our journey. What matters this short step if it leads us to our Father's home? That is the message

Christ brought into the world. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all other things shall be added." Does a miner digging in the western hills for gold mind the fatigue and the hardships? Not if he has prospects of gold. For he looks beyond and beholds ease and comforts. And Christ gives us prospects greater than those of earth, for He tells us that if we receive Him and live by Him, we shall be His brethren and the children of His Father in heaven. That teaching transforms society by transforming the individual. It is the only way. Read history.

That is the remedy the world needs today, not only those who are under, but those who are on top, — especially those on top. If by nature they are better endowed than their fellows, or more fortunate in the struggle of life, Christ bids them remember justice. Not only justice, but also consideration and charity. Human nature can stand just so much. Those under are very patient. But there is a measure in all things. And a time comes when those under become mad, mad at the patriotic cant, the profiteering, the waste, the indifference of those above. Mad at the combination of capital to dominate them, mad at their helplessness to redress grievances. From those on top they learn a lesson. They combine. If they cannot win, they can ruin. With backs against the wall, they will fight to destroy. Result, a cataclysm. That comes from those on top

not taking the prescription of the great Physician. And those under? They have learned from those above that religion does not count. Evils which they would bear patiently, even contentedly, under the influence of religion, they now find absolutely maddening.

There are those who say that Christianity has failed, that it has passed away, that it has had its day, that men of intellect can no longer give it allegiance. They said that fifteen hundred years ago. Rationalism never had such a champion as Augustine. He assailed Christianity so terribly that St. Ambrose had the following petition inserted in the public litanies: "*A logica Augustini, libera nos Domine!*[1] Yet this dreadful foe became the firm champion of Christianity, its greatest champion in an era of great champions. No man ever lived who was a better spokesman for free thought than Augustine. No one could be a better witness to the greatness of natural wisdom. But his career also shows how "reason by lust is swayed."[2] Augustine fought Christianity harder than any modern opponent, but he was so great that when he was defeated, he knew it.

Some people fancy that it is only now that Christianity is being assailed, but from the very beginning

[1] Giry, Vie des Saints, 28 Aug. (From the arguments of Augustine, O Lord, deliver us.)

[2] Inferno, Canto V, 39.

it has been fought hard by the world. And it will be to the end. Christ has said it. That alone almost makes Him divine. What leader of an undertaking ever predicted continual opposition? But He who declared that His followers would have opposition, also proclaimed that they should not fear, for as He had overcome, so should they.

They tell us now that Christianity is a minority. So was it in the days of Christ Himself and the Apostles. It was a minority when it worshipped in the catacombs and withstood the assaults of the Roman Empire. It was a minority when Hun and Goth and Vandal laid waste Europe. They tell us now that men of intellect cannot accept Christianity. But no institution in the history of the world has such a roster of genius as Christianity. When her present intellectual opponents dwindle to insignificance in history, the names of those giants of intellect who gloried in being Christians will stand out large on the roll of the world's greatest thinkers. They tell us now that men in position and power reject Christianity. It was those in position and power who rejected Christ Himself. Pilate could find no cause to condemn Jesus, but he nevertheless condemned Him. The great ones today act in the same way,— expedientially, selfishly. They tell us that Christianity is for the ignorant and the superstitious. That was said in the days of the Cæsars, but Justin and Origen and Tertullian left the ranks of the pagan

philosophers to become associates of the lowly followers of Christ. And there are no scholars today superior to those Titans of intellect and erudition.

They tell us that the scientific men of today cannot square science with Christianity. And they who speak thus, for the most part, know as much about Christianity as about the geography of the moon. Pasteur was a pretty fair scientist. He was also a sincere Christian. Sir Bertram Windle, F. R. S., is a fairly good scientist and also a champion of Christianity. Most of the scientific notables of today are so engrossed in physical phenomena that they never give a thought to anything else. They simply echo and pass on what someone has said on religion. A man might be a very good botanist, but hardly for that reason an authority on international law. I have talked with men who are absorbed in matters scientific and many of them do not know the A B C of Christianity. But that does not stop them from relegating it to the scrap. The scientists of Pliny's day also rejected Christianity. But Christ established His religion on a better basis than the dicta of changeable scientists. Pliny is now but a name. Christianity is now a fact.

Time is the best test of truth, for truth remains. Christianity is the only institution in the world today which remains unchanged from the days of Cæsar Augustus. Everything else has passed away or is passing. Everything else has changed or is

changing. This statement cannot be challenged except by those who do not know Christianity. I know of course that writers may point to the diversity of Christian sects. But they could do that in the day of Augustine. Arianism was a bigger division than anything of our day. But Arianism was not Christianity. It said it was. But Arianism decayed and died. Christianity was only beginning.

Christianity is the religion of Jesus Christ, as taught once for all by Jesus Christ, and entrusted to His own instrumentality for perpetuating it unchanged to the end of the world. Christ did not fit out the bark of faith and entrust it to the waves without a pilot. It is the Christianity of Christ that we must consider, not the man-made substitute. And it is the Christianity of Christ that will restore the world. Unless we now turn to true Christianity, we shall turn to the conflicting passions of men. What that is we know from sad experience. The Christianity of Christ took Europe when it was overrun by the barbarous hordes of the North, and fashioned it into the highest civilization and contentment in the history of the world. Read history; true history, not the propaganda of the enemy. It is said that the World War was won by propaganda. It is the most powerful of all weapons. It has been the greatest foe of Christ's Christianity. During the war you perhaps wondered how certain men of education could hold certain views. It was propaganda. They

based their judgment on enemy statements. It was not a question of facts and brains, but of propaganda.

For two thousand years there has been a subtle propaganda against the Christianity of Christ. It would have destroyed over and over again anything but Christ's Christianity. Look at it squarely in the face. Is there anything about Christ's Christianity that you do not in your heart admire? Is there anything about Christ's Christianity that does not make for a better individual, a better family, a better community, a better state? Human passion comes in and clouds our judgment, because Christ's Christianity demands of us a standard of life which imposes restraints on our passions. But if you were judging for others, and if you understood Christ's Christianity and the needs of poor human nature, you would not hesitate to declare for true Christianity. Millions and millions in every part of the civilized world are living that Christianity today. They may be in the minority. So were they when Nero slandered them as the enemies of the State. There was a minority at Thermopylæ and they apparently lost. But was there ever such a victory! Christ was a minority on Calvary. But where now is the majority that nailed Him to the cross by their propaganda!

The grain of corn dies in order to live. Christ now lives in the hearts of countless followers. The world and its fashion changes and will pass away.

Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. The Christianity of Christ has survived the propaganda of the past. It has restored the world before. It will restore it again, spite of propaganda, if only the world will cooperate. Patient and Physician must work together.

CHAPTER XIII

YOUR VERDICT

I HAVE endeavored to put the case of Christianity before you as it might be presented to a modern jury. In doing so, facts have been adduced which no judicial tribunal could throw out of court. On these facts alone Christianity rests its case. A judicial verdict is rendered only by setting aside preconceived notions bearing on the case, and accepting the evidence with open mind.

We have shown that Christianity was the most radical reform ever introduced into the world. The world was heading down hill, but by this new power it was reversed. That reversal cost mankind more than any change or reform that was ever introduced among mankind. We know the opposition which ordinary reforms meet with. This was the most extraordinary reform conceivable.

Consequently, it stands to reason that to bring it about required some remarkable inducement. Where the acceptance meant so much, the very best credentials for the soundness of the reform were demanded and given.

Any other supposition would mean that human nature was less exacting then than now. But it was

the reverse. Men were more exacting then because scepticism was the order of the day. Philosophers and cynics abounded during the period of the introduction of Christianity. The Gospels and the Gospel veracity were examined by every means known to human ingenuity.

It was against their will that the pagans admitted the Christian documents. For they did not want to admit a body of truths which would imply that they were in error and would restrain their license. But they admitted the Gospels and their teaching because the evidence was clear and strong. Some did not admit Christianity, just as some did not receive Christ Himself. But always there will be men who prefer darkness to light.

The millions who accepted Christianity did so because of the certainty of the evidence. Modern critical scholarship has confirmed the judgment of these early believers. The most learned men of literature, the most critical scientific historians, are now agreed, as a body, that the Gospels were written in Apostolic times, by Apostolic men, and that they record the truth.

Harnack, a leader among liberal thinkers, a most exact man of research, recognizes in the Founder of Christianity a person altogether different from and superior to the rest of mankind. No scientific investigator ever strove harder to discover flaws in the Christian credentials. And with what results? He

affirms that no documents of history are more trustworthy than the Gospels.[1]

It is from these documents we have taken the facts presented to you. You cannot afford to make light of testimony from such authentic sources. In any court of law, before any jury, it would be admitted. That is why I ask a judicial and not a prejudicial hearing.

Sometimes a trial gets a change of venue because it is realized a just verdict cannot be obtained in the place where the court sits. The jury in certain environments are not capable of an impartial consideration of the evidence. They are under prejudice from their surroundings. Are you in need of a change of venue? Must you change your attitude of mind in order to weigh this matter aright?

This same Harnack, prince of free-thinkers, speaking of Christ's character, says: "One ray of His light changes the inner life of man. . . . His Gospel cannot be replaced by anything else. . . . He has done many wonderful deeds, which are partly inexplicable to this day. . . . Without scientific teaching, without inner struggles, He has displayed a mighty, original teaching power, and poured forth truths in abundance, solely from His own rich mind. . . . The personality of Christ is and remains the only foundation of all moral culture." [2]

[1] "Nature of Christianity," p. 11.
[2] "Nature of Christianity," c. I.

At the World's Congress for religious liberty, held in Berlin, 1911, Harnack stated: "It is an assured fact that God made this same Jesus, to be the Lord and Christ for mankind; and that faith in Him has always produced children of God, and produces them still." Why then did not Harnack believe that Christ was God? For the same reason that the Jewish high priests and the Scribes and Pharisees did not believe.

Faith is a gift to the humble, not to the scientific only. Faith is not an intellectual deduction, but a gift of God. And God gives it to everyone who does his own part to deserve it. Intellect may lead a man to see evidence, but will not force him to accept it if the acceptance tends to humble his pride.

For that reason, Jesus said: "Unless you enter the kingdom of heaven as little children, ye shall not enter." Little children trust and love their parents. God wants our trust and our love. The trust of a child, although so complete, is well placed. It is founded on the highest reason, for it is founded on nature.

And so our faith in God is not a mere rational deduction. That is why so many learned people say such beautiful things about Christianity, and yet do not become believers in the true divinity of Christ nor in His divine mission.

I have laid stress on the testimony of a man like Harnack because he cannot be suspected of credulity.

No man ever examined the Christian sources more minutely than he, and his conclusion was that they stand as veritable history.

Hence, my dear jurors, do not settle the matter with a shrug of the shoulders, or wave it aside as beneath your intellectual consideration. Weigh the facts as established with open and honest mind. There is no use examining into a case if beforehand your mind is absolutely fixed. For that reason, in a court of law, a juror is excused if he says he has made up his mind inflexibly about the matter.

Now resting the case of Christianity on the firm basis of the certified truth of the records, we find that they contain credentials of the divine mission of Christ, which are the strongest and soundest that can be presented for human consideraiton.

The Resurrection of Christ, in its every detail, forms a credential that is unassailable by any fair and enlightened mind. We have seen how Christ Himself pointed to it before its occurrence as the sign from heaven that His mission was from God. And after its occurrence, it was the sign always referred to by the Apostles as the credential for their mission. It was a sign so certain and so striking that the Apostles gave their lives for the religion it attested, and millions of pagans changed from idolatry to Christianity in virtue of it.

The sign of the Resurrection was the more wonderful in that it was also a prophecy fulfilled. For

Christ had distinctly and accurately foretold it, and the Jewish leaders are on record as knowing of the prophecy and taking precautions against its fulfilment, but in vain.

Finally, we have studied the personality and the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself, and we have found that He is His own best credential. He spoke as God, He lived as God, He performed the deeds of God, He declared He was God. If His claims to divinity are astounding, so are the deeds by which He substantiated them. If He spoke as God, His actions were also God-like. Some may try to explain away His words. They cannot explain away His deeds.

If His actions were therefore divine, and if they were performed to substantiate His divine claims, it was God Himself from above putting His seal on Christ, His claims and His mission. Whatever, therefore, Christ said for our instruction has the sanction of God Himself.

Before finally leaving this world, Jesus Christ established a Church to continue until the end of time the mission which He inaugurated. He gave this Church His absolute guarantee that He would be with it always, and that it should never err in teaching mankind the things which He came down from heaven to impart.

In matters of faith and morals, the Church of Christ speaks as Christ Himself. Not that the men

who constitute the teaching Church are wiser than other men, but that, by God's special guidance, they are safeguarded as representatives of Jesus Christ in teaching what He commanded them to teach. Christianity thus established acted as a truly divine agency in the world, transforming it in its most vital aspects, uprooting century old vices and injustices and practices which were beyond any human power to remedy.

Today, after twenty centuries, we behold the religion of Jesus Christ spread all over the world. All the civilized peoples of the earth are dominated by Christian principles. We see flourishing everywhere the fruits of Christianity. Indeed, so radically has the world been changed by Jesus Christ that we shudder now to think of the condition of mankind before His coming.

And so thoroughly has His teaching transformed the human race that we now look upon as natural and ordinary a condition of affairs which was absolutely unknown and unhoped for by those who lived before Christianity. We need to weigh and to insist on this point. There are many today living in peace and security and justice who never even dream that this is directly due to Christianity.

There were laws and civilizations and supreme human endeavors before Christianity, but they were not able to do away with slavery, or the vile condition of women, or open vice, or the slaying of prisoners of war, or idol worship, or neglect and cruelty in

regard to the aged, the infirm and the unfortunate. These results of Christianity are like the miracles in regard to Christ, they prove its divinity.

The very fact that Christianity has existed all these centuries is a miracle. But she has not merely existed, she has grown and developed until now she exerts her sway over the whole civilized world. She is thus fulfilling Christ's prophecy that He would be with her always.

For unless He were with her, she had long since passed away. Other institutions much more powerful, humanly considered, have broken up and disappeared. But it is the divine in Christianity that maintains it, and maintains it against the greatest odds that any institution ever faced. All this is the seal of divinity on it.

Other institutions find it hard to maintain even a national or racial existence. Christianity burst the bonds of nation and race and embraces all nations and races. She has carried out the commission given her by her Founder to teach all nations. Gradually her voice will be heard further and further until no race or place in the world will be outside her influence. Today Christian principles and Christian worship characterize most of the advanced peoples of the world.

God leaves nations free as well as individuals. As some of the people who saw and heard Him when He was on earth refused to abide by Him, so it is today

with some people and some nations. But it is not the fault of the Light. "The Light shineth in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it."

The Light now shineth on you. Do you wish to remain in darkness? For the sake of being your own guide, will you refuse the hand of God which He offers you? Do you prefer to be in darkness in order to have your own way, or will you accept the light and live God's way? That is the whole issue. The case of Christianity is clear, it is certain. For the sake of being a law unto yourself, will you remain outside?

We may live as we wish. We may be our own law if we will. God has left us free. But He has not left us without responsibility. If we choose to use our liberty to serve ourselves rather than to serve Him, He will let us, but He will judge us by His law, not by ours. "If thou wilt enter into life everlasting, keep the commandments."

Nor can you say, as some do, that you would believe in the divinity of Christ if you thought He meant just what He said? God foresaw that objection and prepared the answer to it. He knew He would not be on earth always to explain His speech and His enactments. So He constituted His Church and endowed it with His own power, and made it His voice in the world, saying: "He that heareth you heareth me."

Now this Church tells us solemnly that Christ is

the true Son of God. Being officially appointed by God to interpret His words, she declares that He is true God of true God. Jesus Christ, by the approval of miracles, showed that He was from God, since only divine power can effect miracles. His mission being thus stamped as divine by God, it was impossible for Him as a divine messenger to deceive.

When therefore He established His Church and guaranteed it against error, it was a divine guarantee. The Church with this divine guarantee of truth affirms the real nature of her Founder. She declares magisterially that Jesus Christ is the true and only begotten Son of God. Hence, even if Christ said nothing about His divinity, but merely showed that His mission was from God, His divinity would be manifest from the teaching of the Church, which was divinely guaranteed by Him to teach the truth always.

Now no one can reasonably deny that Christ is at least a messenger from God. Taking therefore the very lowest estimate of Him, He, as a divine messenger, established a Church, and, as the envoy of God, declared it would never err. God could not permit His envoy to give a false guarantee. Therefore the Church is divinely guided to teach the truth. And the fundamental teaching of the Church always has been that Jesus Christ is the real Son of God. I lay stress on this point, even to repetition, because the divinity of Christ is the basis of Christianity.

Christ did not leave us orphans. On His departure, He left a representative that was always to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, as He Himself was when among mankind. This representative is His Church. If it were not for the establishment of the Church, His teaching would very soon have disappeared or been distorted.

Through and by the Church, Christianity was established. Christianity does not exist by itself as a separate entity. It is the spirit of Christ in the world engendered by the activities of the living Church. It is the result of the teaching and ministrations and example of those commissioned by Christ to carry on His work. If there were no living and visible Church to safeguard and propagate the teaching of Christ, there would be no Christianity.

Some people think that Christianity is an immaterial something existing by itself and influencing mankind. It is nothing of the sort. It is merely the expression and practice of the teaching and influence of the living Church. Remove the Church, and Christianity would soon disappear, just as a man's shadow disappears with himself.

It is necessary to realize this fully, for otherwise we might fancy that it is sufficient to admire and approve of Christianity in order to maintain its wonderful influence in the world. No, if we wish the world to continue Christian, we must do our part to be true members of Christ's Church. "Not every

one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Now it is God's will that we be faithful members of the Church He established on earth. For it is by living as that Church directs that we shall fulfil our duty here and reach the eternal inheritance for which we were made. Christ came on earth in order to point out for us mortals the way to immortality. In His Church He has left the helps and directions for the attainment of that blessed destiny. But man must use the help and follow the directions. Merely nominal Christianity is no Christianity. It is worse, it libels Christianity.

In giving our verdict, therefore, on Christianity, it must be practically given. Mere admiration is nothing. Some of the most depraved of mankind have given that. Our answer must be the acceptance of Christianity in our lives. We must belong to the Church of God and live by its precepts.

That Church is in the world today, as Christ guaranteed it would be. And it is not hard to find it. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is with it as He foretold. Being God, all that He says is so. Look around you, therefore, and you will recognize that Church.

Remember that it must be the Church which teaches just what He taught, and which goes right back to Christ Himself, its Founder. Any Church

which fails in one iota to proclaim the doctrine which He left with His Apostles and which He commanded them to impart to all nations, is not His Church. Man cannot improve on God's work. That is why the Church of God can not compromise.

When Christ commissioned His Apostles to teach to the world whatsoever things He commanded them, He gave them definite doctrines which are unchangeable. To alter in any particular the body of doctrine He gave to the world is to be false to Him. It is worse than false, it is an insult. If a staff officer should change the instructions of his commander-in-chief, he would be court-martialled and shot. Yet a commander-in-chief may be mistaken.

But Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cannot be mistaken, and no conditions can arise which He did not know at the time when He gave once for all His teaching to mankind. Truth never changes. Only error is subject to revision. We have never had to change the multiplication table. God's teaching is as true as mathematics.

From the very beginning of Christianity, that teaching was embodied fundamentally in the Apostles' Creed. That symbol of faith which came from Christ and His Apostles is the keystone of the Christian arch which joins earth and heaven. It is the corner stone of the true Church of Christ which He constructed with His own divine hands. No

man or body of men may alter the architecture of the divine architect.

Look around you, therefore, and see what Church is established, not here or there, not in this nation or that, but in every nation of the world. Look for the Church whose branches extend over the world and yet are united vitally with one trunk.

See the Church which has been in the world since the day of Christ, and has held sacredly to every article of belief which He revealed. Consider the Church which, during all the changes of the ages, has not changed. Behold the Church which, though adapting herself to all the requirements of mankind in every age and land, has remained always the same, as truth remains always the same. Finally, look for that Church which holds now in every particular the Apostles' Creed, that symbol of faith established in the first days of Christianity.

That Church is the true Church of Christ. He established one Church and one Faith. That Faith was summarized in the Apostles' Creed. His true Church today must hold that Creed literally and entirely. That Creed proclaims God as the Creator of the world, and Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, who for us became man. It announces the resurrection of the body and life everlasting, and it declares that every human being must stand judgment before the tribunal of Jesus Christ.

These and other things it proclaims, and no Church that does not proclaim and insist on the very same truths is His. Take the Apostles' Creed as your test of Christianity, and if you desire to be a true follower of Jesus Christ, become a living member of the Church which holds absolutely and unequivocally every article of that Creed.

No one but God, who gave that Creed, through the Apostles, is entitled to change it. No Church is authorized to revise or minimize it. That is why the true Church can make no compromise in regard to Faith. It must be transmitted just as it is from generation to generation unto the end of the world. And it will be, for Christ Himself has said it, and He is with His Church always.

Look, therefore, for the Church which has ever, and shall ever, proclaim the truths of the Apostles' Creed. That is the Church which inaugurated Christianity, which continued Christianity and which will maintain Christianity to the end.

If then you are convinced of the truth of Christianity, take the logical step and live a true member of that Church which now, as ever, holds unqualifiedly and uncompromisingly The Apostles' Creed: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

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